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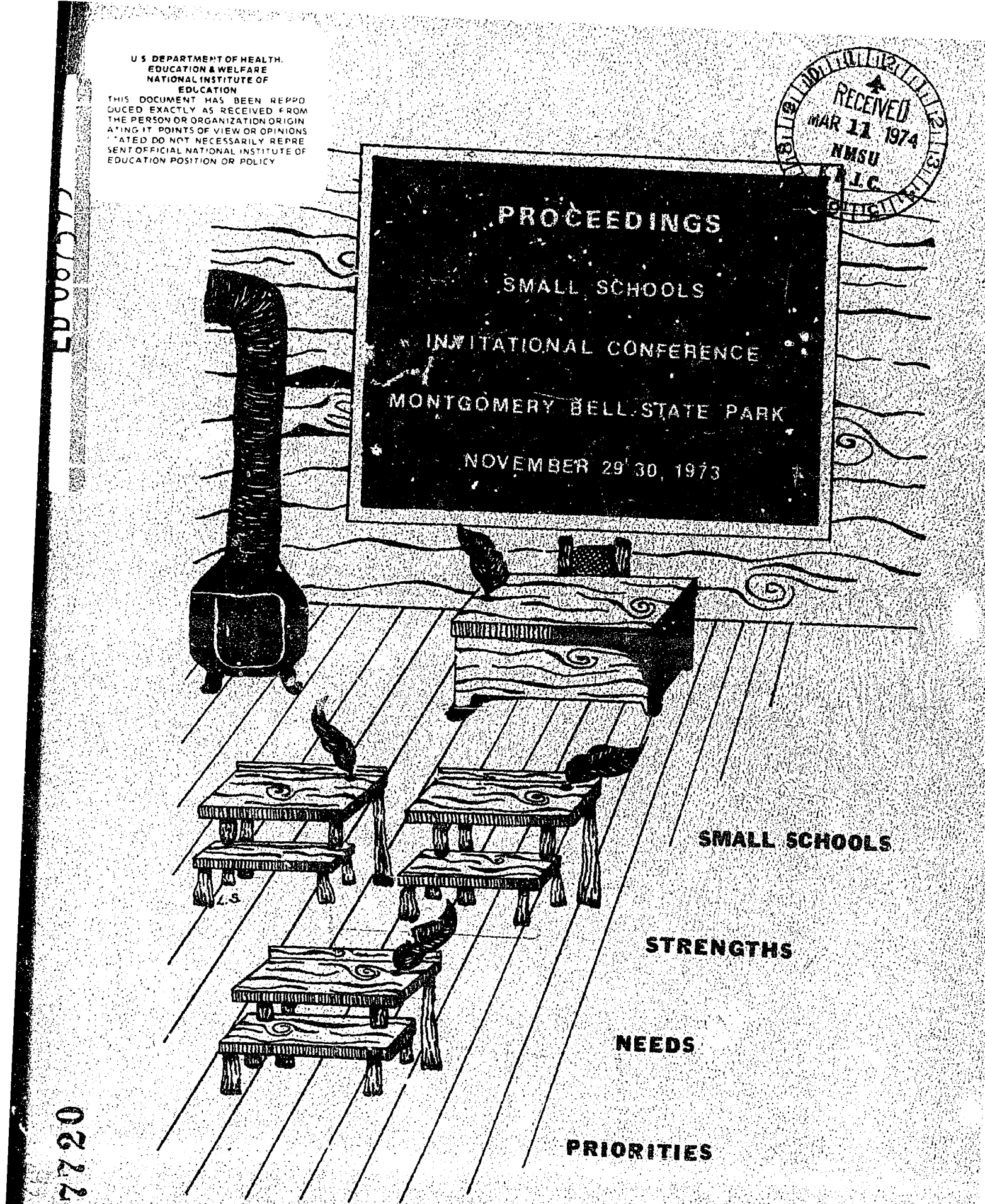
ABSTRACT

The Invitational Small Schools Conference, held November 1973 in Tennessee, was the starting point in launching the Small Schools Task Force. The primary objectives of this task force are to identify needs and priorities of small schools in Tennessee, to provide leadership for the development of pre- and inservice education programs for small school personnel, and to generate research related to the small school. These objectives were especially aimed at 96 small school districts in Tennessee which in all likelihood need assistance they are currently not receiving. The Task Force Position Paper, the first presented at the conference, gave purposes, needs, and strategies. The second paper, Strengths and Weaknesses of Small Schools, included practices, programs, and administrator considerations. Other presentations were: Political Realities; The Economic Picture; The Educational Scene; Social Values in Rural Tennessee; Demographic Considerations; Health Conditions and Services; and The Development of Rural Education: The State of the Art. The Conference Summary presented participant views of the discussions. Persons attending the conference were also listed. The Appendix gave characteristics of the model innovative and rural futures development processes. (KM)



SMALL SCHOOLS

STRENGTHS

NEEDS

PRIORITIES

PROCEEDINGS

SMALL SCHOOLS
INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE

MONTGOMERY BELL STATE PARK

NOVEMBER 29-30, 1973

A REPORT

SMALL SCHOOLS TASK FORCE
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

FEBRUARY, 1974

A REPORT

OF A

SMALL SCHOOLS INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE

MONTGOMERY BELL STATE PARK

NOVEMBER 29-30, 1973

P R E F A C E

The College of Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville under the leadership of Dean James D. McComas initiated the Small Schools Task Force. The primary objectives of this task force are to identify needs and priorities of small schools in Tennessee, to provide leadership for the development of pre and inservice education programs for small school personnel, and to generate research related to the small school. In final analysis there are 96 small school districts in Tennessee (school districts having fewer than 5,000 students) which in all likelihood need assistance which they are not currently receiving. The primary focus of the task force then is to attempt to determine what help they need most and by what process that help can be most effectively delivered.

The starting point activity which launched the task force was the Invitational Small Schools Conference, November 29 and 30, 1973. It was attended by 86 dedicated people with deep concerns for the future of small schools. The pages which follow report the conference and includes the papers presented as well as important concepts and suggestions for Task Force consideration coming from small group discussion and reporting.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

The Task Force for Small Schools is moving toward becoming a reality. Credit for the progress to this point belongs to many. Dean McComas developed the broad concept and has supported and been involved directly in development at all stages. Many faculty members in the College of Education have encouraged the move toward establishment of the Task Force and have at times chided and prodded the directors to move more rapidly.

A special debt is due members of the Conference Planning Committee for their hours of planning and participation in the Conference. This committee included the following people: Roy Bowen, Roane County; Claude Collins, Hancock County; David Craig, UT; Lee Davis, Overton County; Carroll Hall, ERIC Clearinghouse; Wayne Johnson, UT; John Lovell, UT; Wayne Myers, State Department; Clay Neely, Claiborne County; Bill Poppen, UT; and Tom Ryan, UT.

Special thanks is due those who prepared position pagers: Beth Freeman, John Johnson, Jean Hickey, Dewey Stollar, Sally Snider, Bill Locke, Karl Jost, Tom Ryan, William Cole and Paul Zarbock.

Those who served as small group discussion leaders, chairmen, and recorders were much appreciated. Special notes of thanks belong to John Lovell and Lee Davis who served as reactors and to Russell French who summarized the conference.

Sincere thanks are due Everett Edington, Director, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and to Rowan Stutz, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory who keynoted each of the conference general sessions and to Jim McComas and Karl Keefer who presided.

And finally a big note of thanks goes to the people whose concern and interest caused them to attend and actively participate in the conference deliberations.

E. Dale Doak
Co-Director, Task Force

O. K. O'Fallon
Co-Director, Task Force

TABLE OF CONTENTS

C O N F E R E N C E P L A N N I N G C O M M I T T E E

Roy Bowen
Roane County Schools
Kingston

Claude Collins
Hancock County Schools
Sneedville

Dave Craig
College of Education
UT, Knoxville

Lee Davis
Overton County Schools
Livingston

Dale Doak
College of Education
UT, Knoxville

Edell Hearne
College of Education
TTU, Cookeville

Wayne Johnson
College of Education
U.T., Knoxville

John Lovell
College of Education
UT, Knoxville

Wayne Myers
State Department of Education
Nashville

Clay Neely
Claiborne County Schools
Tazewell

Ken O'Fallon
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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION TASK FORCE FOR SMALL SCHOOLS IN TENNESSEE

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This position paper was prepared as a background for planning and was made available to conference participants as a part of a package which included the invitation to attend. - Ed. Note

Introduction

Public schools in general have been slow to adopt new ideas and innovations. Much of this failure is inherent in the very organization and control of public schools. Much of it can be attributed to the inability of public school staff to maintain current knowledge about new educational practices and to a reward system which does not encourage or promote change. Simply stated, teachers and administrators of the public schools lack time and motivation for becoming involved in the identification and solution of basic problems. It is evident that the public schools need assistance in these endeavors if for no other reason than the fact that the dissemination of educational ideas and innovations has been unbearably slow. But more importantly, the past history of reluctance or inability to change on the part of the public school cannot continue in the present mode if this institution is to perform a significant role in a dynamic, pluralistic, rapidly changing society.

Small schools, because of their isolation (geographically and otherwise), because much flexibility to innovate and explore is lost in their

smallness, because staffing patterns have tended toward recruitment from within the community, because information and communication has focused upon localite rather than cosmopolite sources, because of these and many other factors small schools have been very slow to change in response to changing societal needs.

Purposes

The purposes of this project are:

1. To identify and create awareness of needs, problems, and priorities of small schools in Tennessee;
2. To define and initiate changes in preparation programs for professional education personnel which recognize the needs, problems, and priorities of small schools;
3. To develop and implement strategies for inservice improvement of school programs and lay leadership in Tennessee small schools; and
4. To generate research related to the needs, programs, and processes.

Review of the Literature

Small schools, particularly small high schools, have been the center of controversy for many years. In the last two decades considerable effort has been directed toward reorganization and consolidation of small school districts into larger districts. Larger districts are reportedly more sound economically and can offer a better educational program. This effort has been only partially successful. A substantial number of small schools remain and are faced with problems of inadequate facilities for specialized courses, lack of finances, low teachers' salaries, too few students to justify the offering of advanced classes, and teachers who are forced to teach three or more subjects daily, frequently outside their area of preparation.

The fact is, however, that many small schools do exist and serve a substantial number of students. Geographical isolation, sparse population, long distances and poor roads cause one to conclude that many small schools are ,tined to exist for some time. The problem becomes one, the solution of which takes us beyond the combining of school districts to achieve a larger grouping of pupils, toward an internal reorganization of the small school itself.

In efforts to cope with these and other problems of small schools several small schools projects were launched in the 1960's. Common to their operational procedures was the combining of teaching staffs from several schools for the purpose of curriculum development.

The Catskill Area Project in Small School Design was one such project. It had two prime objectives: (1) The development of actual practices which are immediately useful to the improvement of education; and (2) the development of fundamental concepts essential to basic changes in the internal organization of small schools.[5] The project served schools varying in enrollment from 250 to 1,100 pupils in a tri-county area in New York State's upper Catskill Mountain Region.[6] Recommendations from this project suggest flexible scheduling, supervised correspondence study, school aides, multiple classes (two or more different subjects taught in the same room at the same

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[5] National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, Changes in Teacher Education: An Appraisal (Official Report of the Columbus Conference, Eighteenth National T.E.P.S. Conference), Frank W. Cyu, "Implications of the Catskill Area Project in Small School Design for Teacher Education." Washington, D. C.; National Education Association, 1964), p. 39.

[6] Ibid., p. 380.

time and by the same teacher), staff versatility, greater use of technology, shared services, emphasis on multi-purpose facilities designed to serve small numbers of students, and teacher inservice education.[7]

Another project of a similar nature serving five states (Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah) was the Western States Small Schools Project. The project organizers stated five assumptions about small schools which served as guidelines for their efforts.

These were:

1. The isolated small schools will continue to educate significant numbers of children.

2. Rural education needs special research and development attention to determine uniqueness and similarities when compared with the extant programs in the cities.

3. Solutions proposed for urban and suburban schools are not always applicable or susceptible to direct transfer to rural areas.

4. There are some inherent potential strengths in smallness that have not been analyzed adequately to justify inferences for all of education.

5. Extensive school district reorganization and changing state support formulas, although necessary prerequisites to improved quality, are not of themselves sufficient guarantees that isolated schools will offer excellent and comprehensive educations for all the children.[8]

The goals of this project were:

1. Broader and higher quality academic and vocational curricula.

2. Changed organization for instruction.

3. Improvement of teaching and administration through inservice education.[9]

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[7] Ibid, pp. 381-388.

[8] Ralph Bohrson and Rowan Stutz, "Small School Improvement: Urban Renewal Begins in the Country," NASSP Bulletin, 50:56, February, 1966.

[9] Ibid.

Bohrson and Stutz suggested that:

> *"Because of lack of supervisory service, remoteness from college campuses, and the infrequency of contact with state departments of education, small schools tended to operate as they had in the 1890's. They were generally slow in adopting new educational practices. However, the regional effort seems to be a partial answer to the problem. The distance between the idea and the small schools' adoption seems shorter in the WSSSP states.*[10]

Curricula areas which have received developmental support from the Project include such practices as mobile service, personalized curriculum, independent study, individual and small group instruction, team teaching, learning laboratories, imaginative use of educational technology, and better marking and reporting procedures. Hopefully, these are being blended into an instructional design.

The Texas Small Schools Project had as its focus inservice for teachers, curriculum guide development, forum meetings, opportunities for contact with consultants and personnel from other public schools, college professors and other resource people, and meetings for demonstrations of new instructional materials. A prime organizational factor in this project was the regional grouping of schools for cooperative curriculum development.[11]

A relatively recent project, The West Virginia Special Needs Project, had as its purpose to learn more about how to work effectively with low-income, rural, non-farm groups. The three test communities had not had experience with Extension activities. Programs in early childhood education, health, recreation and community development were introduced.

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[10] Ibid., p. 57.

[11] Charles T. Bitters, "Quality and Variety in Texas Small Schools," NASSP Bulletin, 50: pp. 63-64, February, 1966.

The major conclusion of this evaluation study was that the project demonstrated that organizational structures can be created, new services delivered, and educational work can be carried on by Extension in low-income rural communities.[12]

An EPDA Project carried out in rural Southern Indiana and reported by the University of Indiana was concerned basically with improving teacher effectiveness in small rural schools. The project was based upon a training-consultation model and moved toward a change production model. Consultation and use of teams as training units and as mechanisms for producing change in schools was the primary focus of the project. The following observations from the Report could be useful:

> *"The impact of the external consultant team greatly depends on the degree to which the consultant team can expand its membership to include persons of the school system from various sub groups (teachers, administrators, students, parents) in planning, goal setting, and action step planning."*[13]
>
> *"Rural community leaders, teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members usually represent the community sentiments with great accuracy, and if removed, they in all likelihood will be replaced by persons with similar values".*
>
> *"A broad base of support is required for initiating and maintaining significant educational changes in rural schools. This suggests that school consultants need to also include school board and community members in their consultation".*
>
> *"Providing feedback to teachers or other target groups being evaluated is very important. Few*

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[12] Miller, Robert W. and Others, "Approaches to University Extension Work with Rural Disadvantaged: Description and Analysis of a Pilot Effort," West Virginia Univ., Morgantown, West Virginia Center for Appalachian Studies and Development, August 1972.

[13] Anastasiow, Nicholas J., editor, "Schools in Crisis -- Models for Renewal," Viewpoints, Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University, 48-6, November, 1972.

things are as disconcerting as having someone collect data, observe classes, or gather any type of information for undisclosed purposes, the results of which are never shared".

Each of these projects had prime objectives of dissemination of new educational ideas, helping public schools identify curricula concerns, and providing specialized assistance in problem solving, innovation, and adoption of innovations to a particular school situation.

As a result of these and other similar projects only one outcome with broad implications appears to have resulted - the movement toward regional sharing of services and programs. No new inservice or preservice education models for the training of teachers and administrators have resulted which have demonstrated their effectiveness; no new, innovative, more effective strategies for dissemination of information are in evidence; little or no research exists related to small schools, their needs and problems, and potential solutions. In fact, there seems to be less activity of the nature just mentioned today and as related to small schools than there was a decade ago. Yet the small schools and problems related to them remain and are destined to remain for many years unless activities related to solution of the many problems of small schools are heightened.

Studies of Educational Need in Rural Appalachia. Needs studies conducted in Appalachia are remarkable in their similarity. They generally reveal the need for:

1. Basic skill development (including reading, listening, spelling, written expression).
2. Career-vocational development.
3. Early childhood education.

At least four of the needs studies identified improved attitude toward school as a priority need.[14] (The writer interprets this to include total community attitudes toward both program and operational aspects of schools.)[15] Three of the studies reported adult and continuing education. Improved leadership for education is a topic of concern mentioned in four of the studies.[16] These three areas of need seem to represent causes rather than symptons of the very most basic problems or needs of Appalachia. A program aimed at the solution of these vary basic problems seems mandatory as a prerequisite for solution of the more specific problem areas. Out of such a solution of these basic problems should grow an awareness on the part of the community of the specific program needs as well as a climate conducive to problem solving and new program developments.

Needs studies are helpful in identifying problems; however, to make the transition between a needs study and a new program requires what might be identified as a "cognitive leap." One must ask such questions as "what program(s) will make a long-range impact on the problems identified?" "What is the priority program?" Two particular groups were asked questions closely related to the two posed here, the "AEL Experts" and the AEL Membership.

The AEL Expert Opinion Survey ranked "need for changing attitudes within and about Appalachia" and "need for educational leadership, all facets" as the number one and two problems respectively, within the next five years.

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[14] Campbell, M.C., Directions for Educational Development in Appalachia, Appalachia Education Laboratory, Inc. (Charleston, West Virginia) pp. 5, 27, 41, 49.

[15] Ibid., pp. 41, 49.

[16] Ibid., 5, 19, 41, 49.

They also reported "need for a new or changed organization of the system, political and instructional" (number four), "need for continuing and adult education" (number nine) as priority problems to be solved.[17]

The AEL Membership, with more than two-hundred persons participating, produced a list of seven educational development needs. These include:

> A pattern for community schools, involving programs of educational experience for all members of the family developed out of resources provided by representatives of education, industry, business; based on shared studies of the needs of the area. (Selected by ten groups.)
>
> To develop a structure and operation which would put into effect the innovative programs (already developed by AEL and others), focusing on communicative skills.
>
> A system for the development of self-respect among pupils and interpersonal respect between pupils.
>
> Improved models for improved communications between school-community agencies and between teachers-administrators and school-home.
>
> A process or program to bring about attitudinal change among the groups of administrators, teachers, parents, students and others involved in and with education.
>
> Home intervention in education from prenatal on, with a multi-disciplinary approach--medical, social--educational and environmental which would involve retraining of teachers to deal with real problems of Appalachia to significantly change parents and students.
>
> A program to provide worthwhile learning experiences to individuals--in and out of schools--devising model organizational structures in which these things can happen, including improved communications, climates for changes, with stress on attitudinal changes.[18]

What all of this suggests then is simply that any attempt to change the educational scene in rural Appalachia, without concurrent efforts to affect

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[17] Ibid, pp. 43, 44.

[18] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

change of the social, economic, and political areas of community life, will have very limited impact. Educational institutions, especially in rural Appalachia, interact with all other institutions in a community. Recognition of this simple fact certainly suggests the need for a very different approach to educational change; that is, if the change is to be significant, lasting, and contemporary.

Need for Small Schools Task Force

The following discussion represents only a surface overview statement of the educational needs of students and schools in rural settings. It is intended to cause the reader to raise questions and become more aware of some of the needs of small schools. Included in the discussion are the topics of political climate, student achievement and drop-out, financial support, an analysis of school Districts in Tennessee, and three case reports of attempted educational change in rural schools.

Political Realities. Education does not function in isolation or in a vacuum from the society it serves. Perhaps more than in an urban or suburban setting, the decisions made about the schools (especially staffing and budgetary decisions but also programmatic decisions) in small, rural communities are so closely controlled by the political power structure that to attempt to improve public education without concurrent efforts to change the "life space" in which public schools and public school officials must operate is something akin to an exercise in futility.

The rural community is a politically oriented community with the primary goal of such politics being an economic one. Schools in rural communities are by far the biggest business in said community. Control of the school budget and staffing decisions then is a major goal in this power-economic struggle.

Coupled with this strong economic motive for control of the schools is the fact that most of the community leadership is somewhat limited in its perceptions about quality schools. The community has few outsiders settling there. In fact, the migration is outward with the youth who leave the community for a college education or outside employment frequently leaving for good. Most of the teachers and school administrators are indeed "home grown" products. Within an environment where perceptions are limited there is little acceptance or interest in special programs intended to improve the educational program. Figures revealing reading problems, high drop-out rates, high illiteracy, etc. mean little or nothing. The basic problems, stated as questions include: "How can the perceptions of the community leader be broadened in order that he can understand the need for and be willing to support change in the local schools?" "How can attitudes be changed so that the long-range development of the community through support of public education can become reality?" "How can values be reoriented in order that quality education can become the goal rather than use of school monies and staff positions as a part of the community rewards system for relatives or to support partisian politics?"

These are the paramount problems in rural Tennessee, for without their solution all other problems and program development thrusts to resolve them will become subservient to the political-economic realities of the region.

School Districts in Tennessee. In the following analysis, school districts in Tennessee are divided into six groups according to student enrollments.

Table I indicates that there are 146 school districts in Tennessee with 39,174 teachers, 918 central administrators and 932,436 students. Ninty-six of these school districts have 4,999 or fewer students and will be classified as "small schools" for the purposes of this task force. These ninty-six

small school districts (66 percent of the state's total) have 8,634 teachers (22 percent of the state's total), 288 central administration (31 percent of the state's total), and 215,326 students (23 percent of the state's total). Appendix I contains the specific breakdown of school size, etc.

TABLE I

AN ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN TENNESSEE BY NUMBERS OF TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND STUDENTS, 1972-73

Size	# of Districts	% of Total	% of Teachers	% of Total	# of Central Administrators	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total
20,000 +	7	5	17,387	44	332	36	389,116	42
10,000-19,999	6	4	3,355	9	64	7	82,644	9
5,000- 9,999	37	25	9,762	25	234	25	245,350	26
2,500- 4,999	43	30	6,210	16	159	17	150,324	16
1,000- 2,499	30	21	2,073	5	93	10	50,498	5
0- 999	23	16	387	1	36	4	14,504	2
TOTALS	146	100	39,174	100	918	100	932,436	100

What should be emphasized here is that approximately one-fourth of this State's students are currently attending school in small rural schools which are geographically isolated. The professional staff to be served numbers almost 9,000, a significant number which has been virtually unserved by existing inservice models and emphasis. The case is made elsewhere in this concept paper for the extreme needs of the students and schools in this size category.

Local District Finance in Tennessee. For purposes of analysis counties, including all school districts in each, were classified into six groups according to student enrollments.

Table II shows that most counties in the state of Tennessee have available, on a per pupil in ADA basis, $4,000 to $10,000 in assessed valuation.

Only eight districts have an assessed value per pupil of more than $10,000. Six districts with enrollments of 5,000 or fewer must provide local support with per pupil assessed valuation of less than $4,000.

TABLE II

ASSESSED VALUATION PER PUPIL IN ADA
BY COUNTY* - TENNESSEE

Assessed Valuation per pupil in ADA	20,000+	ENROLLMENTS 10,000 to 19,999	5,000 to 9,999	2,500 to 4,999	1,000 to 2,499	0 to 999
$20,000 +					1	
15,000-19,999						
10,000-14,999	2	1		4	1	
7,000-9,999	3	3	9	10	5	2
4,000-6,999		2	22	15	7	1
1,000-3,999			1	2	2	2

*Data obtained from State Board of Equalization, State of Tennessee, Freeley B. Cook, Director, December 15, 1972.

It is important to remember 52 of the State's 95 counties enroll less than 5,000 pupils. In 29 of this group of counties there is less than $7,000 per pupil available in assessed valuation which means that a local rate of $2.00 per $100.00 would raise only $140.00 or less per pupil. Carried further and applying the same rate, in five of the small enrollment districts $80.00 or less in local money would be available for each student.

Six enrollment groups were used as the basis for analyzing local current expenditures in school districts in Tennessee.

Table III identifies that among the school systems which enrolled fewer than 5,000 in grades K-12, only two supplemented state funds with more than $300 per pupil. Eleven of these school systems added between $200 and $300 per pupil to funds supplied by the state while 32 of the school systems spent less than $100 per pupil above state allotments. Between $100 and $200 per pupil was the local supplement used by the largest number of school systems; however, the range among these school systems was from $4.45 to $336.52. Of the 44 school systems in the state which supplemented state funds at less than the $100 per pupil level 32 were found to enroll fewer than 5,000 students.

TABLE III

LOCAL CURRENT EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL IN ADA 1970-71 BY SCHOOL SYSTEM AND ENROLLMENT - TENNESSEE

Local Current Expend/Pupil in ADA	Enrollments						
	20,000+	10,000 to 19,999	5,000 to 9,999	2,500 to 4,999	1,000 to 2,499	0 to 999	Totals
$300 or more	2		3	1	1		7
200 to 299	5		1	5	4	2	17
100 to 199		6	20	26	15	11	78
99 or less			12	12	10	10	44

*Data compiled from Rankings of the School Systems in Tennessee, 1972. Research Bulletin 1972 - R8.

Emphasis here relates to the fact that local supplement in 84 of the school systems which enrolled fewer than 5,000 pupils was found to be less than $200 per pupil. All but 12 of the state's districts which supplemented state funds with less than $100 per pupil were found in small districts.

Drop-Out Rate By County. Analysis of these data was based on six enrollment categories.

Table IV indicates that forty-five counties, each with one or more school systems, enrolled fewer than 5,000 in grades K-12. Twenty-three of these counties were identified to have a three-year average drop-out rate of 50% or higher and in thirteen counties the rate was below 40. About two-thirds of this group of counties equalled or exceeded the state average of 43%.

TABLE IV

DROP-OUT RATE BY COUNTY
THREE-YEAR AVERAGE*

(State of Tennessee Average 43.0%)

Drop-Out Rate 3 yr. Average	Enrollment 20,000+	10,000 to 19,999	5,000 to 9,999	2,500 to 4,999	1,000 to 2,499	0 to 999
70% or More			1	1	1	
60-69%		1	3	3	5	
50-59%			4	7	2	2
40-49%	2	6	12	8	3	
30-39%	3	4	11	5	5	1
20-29%		2	1	2		

*Data were obtained from "Selected Data for Educational Planners." Compiled by Gary Q. Green for Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education, January 1973.

Important information coming from these data includes the fact that all but thirteen of the districts enrolling fewer than 5,000 pupils have a drop-out rate of more than 40% and this rate is a three-year average. The average drop-out rate in fifteen counties exceeds 60%.

Level of Educational Attainment. Table V gives a summary of the educational attainment levels of citizens who reside in communities of 15,000 and

less as compared with those in communities of 15,001 and more, as well as averages for the total state. In smaller communities 79.9 per cent of the people had less than a high school diploma; in larger communities in Tennessee 54 per cent of the people had less than a high school diploma. Thirty-three per cent of the people in small communities had less than an eighth grade education as compared with 21.1 per cent in large communities. (See Table V, page 17)

Time Projections

Target dates for each of the stated objectives are outlined below.

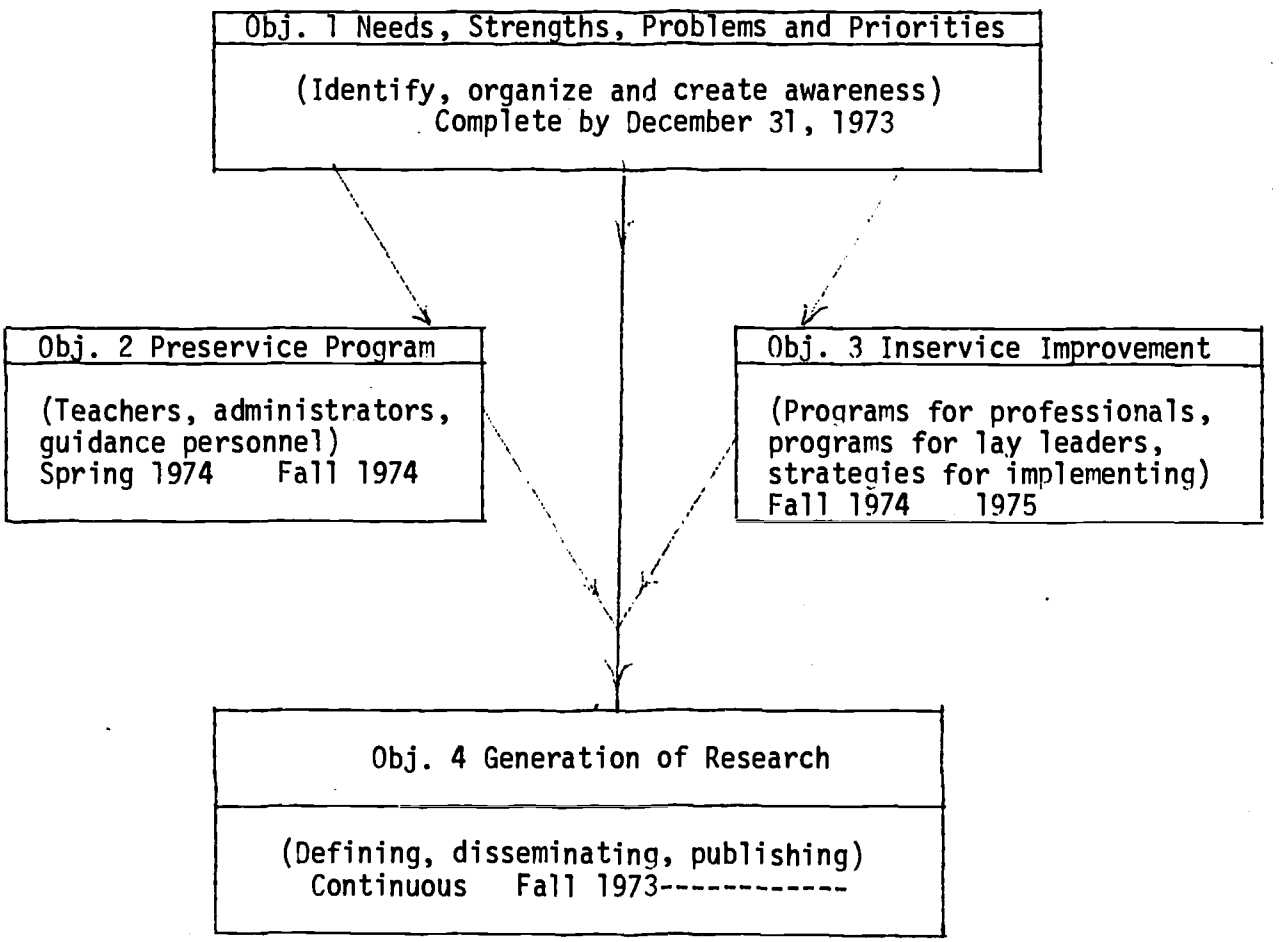

TABLE V

SUMMARY, BY POPULATION, OF LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT*

	TOTAL POPULATION**	LESS THAN 8TH GRADE	PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION	# WITH 8TH GRADE BUT LESS THAN 12TH GRADE	PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION	TOTAL WITH LESS THAN 12TH GRADE	PERCENT OF POPULATION
15,000 & Less	504,716	156,580	33.0	196,191	38.9	362,773	79.9
15,001 & More	1,623,230	342,046	21.1	534,697	32.9	876,741	54.0
TOTAL	2,127,946	508,626	23.9	730,888	34.3	1,239,514	58.2

*U. S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Final Report PC(1)-C44 Tennessee, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1972, p. 44-179.

**All reference to total population refers to the total population of adults 25 years of age and older.

Strategies

Development of interest in and awareness of needs, problems and priorities important to the small, rural oriented, school or school system requires joint involvement of professionals and lay leaders with university and state leadership personnel. Such joint involvement could come to be accomplished with a conference designed to bring people together by invitation. The sponsoring institution would be the College of Education. Outcomes expected from such a conference include: (1) a statement of needs and strengths, problems and priorities of small schools; (2) definitions of procedures and strategies for instituting and carrying out the "Task Force" program; (3) lists of agencies, school units and personnel and university personnel from which participants for the task force steering committee can be obtained. This task force steering committee, utilizing the information generated in the Small Schools Conference, will then design and recommend an overall plan of action.

Summary

The primary objectives of this Task Force will be to identify needs strengths, and priorities of small schools in Tennessee, to provide leadership for the development of pre and inservice education programs for small school personnel and to generate research related to the small school.

There is a significant number of small schools in Tennessee, serving a large number of students. These small schools will continue to exist, for the most part into the foreseeable future. It is hypothesized that these schools have received little support in the past from federal or State agencies, and that they, of all the school districts are least able to initiate self renewal.

In final analysis there are ninty-six small school districts in Tennessee which in all likelihood need assistance they are not currently receiving. The primary focus of this Task Force, then, is to attempt to determine what help they need most and by what process that help can be most effectively delivered.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF SMALL SCHOOLS

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Rural Education and Small Schools
New Mexico State University, Los Crucas

Presiding at the first general session was James D. McComas, Dean of the College of Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Dean McComas also welcomed the participants and set the tone for the conference. - Ed. Note.

Introduction

Over the past number of years, a great amount of concentrated effort and an equal amount of literature have resulted in appraisals, assessments, recommendations, and considerations relating to the small schools in the United States. Along with this literature--containing lists of project objectives, mention of long-recognized problems, and discussions of "possible" solutions to these problems--have come contradictory findings for one who attempts to assess the status of the small school. For example, results of one study may provide a list of numerous strengths in the small school, while these same strengths are viewed in another study as weaknesses that must be overcome.

However, prior to examination of strengths and weaknesses of the small school itself, the composite organizational scheme of the small school system deserves comment. This immediately prompts discussion of school district reorganization since, for the most part, appraisals have placed the small schools in a position which leaves them in a state of educational inferiority in relation to their larger counterparts and thus

suggests that they overcome their smallness by combining efforts and consolidating systems. In many cases, consolidation has increased the opportunities for rural youth, while in the same instances the child may be at a disadvantage because of losing the close contact with teacher and the community.

In reviewing the literature to identify the alleged strengths and weaknesses of the small school, several factors emerge as significant. First, evaluations of small schools are based upon comparisons with large schools (Gividen, 1963; Jackson, 1966). The implication, as was stressed by Conant (1959), is that large or medium schools constitute the desired norm. Secondly, there is an interlocking of strengths and weaknesses related to failure to capitalize on opportunities (Stutz, 1965). Thirdly, the various lists and discussions of strengths and weaknesses contain many duplications (Clements, 1970). It therefore seems pertinent to group the alleged strengths and weaknesses into broader, more general areas.

The alleged strengths may be classified in terms of three areas: organizational concerns, sociocultural considerations, and classroom-management practices. The weaknesses may be grouped under five broad areas: finance and facilities, student characteristics and capabilities, curricular deficiencies, professional staff (including teaching, administration, and counseling), and sociocultural aspects.

Strengths

Organizational Concerns. Organizational strengths of the small school appear to be found in the less formal atmosphere surrounding the system. In comparison to the larger school, the freedom from administrative "pettiness" and red tape forms one of the small school's greatest strengths. The potentiality of flexibility and the close-knit, nonarticulated operation

form other strengths not usually found in the large system. Further, the opportunity for keeping better student progress records is another desirable attribute of the organizational scheme of the small school system.

Other strengths have been noted in studies such as that of Ford. These strengths relate to the ease of implementation for innovation in curriculum and the autonomous feeling the teachers have which supports the freedom for innovation. The Oregon State Board of Education has been a leader in promoting this type of climate, as is evidenced by the work of the Oregon Small Schools Program.

Personal experience has shown that rural teachers and students have a much closer relationship to the school board than is the case in the urban community. It is not uncommon in the small rural school for individual school board members to take direct interest in specific ongoing projects. While this may be considered a strength, some people may also consider it a weakness if board members delve into operational problems for which they have no expertise to solve.

Sociocultural Considerations. Probably the most noted attribute in terms of the sociocultural aspects of the small school system is the professional's personal identification with the community. The educator in the rural community is often a person who is respected and thus has much more leadership and power than does the educator in a larger community. It should also be noted that the rural teacher's status in the community is extremely important in terms of teacher satisfaction.

In the rural community, extremes of wealth are usually not as great as in the urban community; thus, stratification in the cliques along class lines has not been a problem in rural areas.

Quite often in the small community, the school building becomes the community meeting place and is the central focus of many of the social

activities. Researchers have found that the rural school provides for a good student-teacher and parent-community interaction and that there is much more participation in activities in the small school than in the large school.

In a summarization of a conference conducted by the National Federation for the Improvement of Rural Education (NFIRE), it was reported that students in rural communities have a more homogeneous background than their urban counterparts, thus allowing for less conflict. Again, this also may be considered as a weakness since students with diverse backgrounds provide for a broader range of perspectives.

Ford, in a study for the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory on remote high schools, noted that rural teachers are better known to the parents and, because of this, there is a much closer relationship between school and community.

Classroom-Management Practices. It is interesting to note that the practices prevalent throughout the years in the one-room school have manifested themselves in the more innovative programs throughout the nation today. The open classroom, with its individualized approach, was commonplace in the one-room school of rural America wherein the children, by necessity, were working at their own levels on those projects that they could do best. The teacher acted as coordinator and, many times, the older or better students helped those who were younger or slower. This practice provided for individualized instruction plus the opportunity for students to develop the responsibility so necessary in adult life.

Another strength of the small school is that it gives the teacher a much better opportunity to be close to the students, to know them better, and to give them individual attention. This probably does not have to be

true only in the rural school; teachers and administrators in urban or larger schools could capitalize on this strength of the small school.

Discipline in the rural schools is not always the problem that it is in the larger schools, although the literature surveyed did not reveal whether this was due to the fact that rural schools are smaller or whether this was due to the nature of the rural student.

The Catskill Area Project in Small School Design (1959) and Ford (1961) revealed that the teacher-pupil ratios in rural schools are relatively low compared with nonrural schools. Thus, rural teachers can provide more individualized attention to the students. Small classes, however, have some disadvantages (to be discussed later in this paper) such as the relatively higher cost of small classes.

The possibilities of such things as team teaching and flexible scheduling could be widely used in the rural school. This is not necessarily true, however, unless the administration and teachers are willing to implement such innovations in the schools. In relation to this, the Catskill Area Project in Small School Design (1959) found that, in small schools, there is more pupil participation in policy-making and planning school activities. This is probably due to the fact that the students are much closer to the administration than is the case in many larger urban school districts. Also, both Ford (1961) and Stutz (1965) have provided general indications that classroom management in the rural school is not as complicated as it is in the larger school.

In general, the strengths of rural schools are related to the fact that there is a more intimate relationship between the teachers in the community and their students. Most of the writers, however, are basing their statements on general observations rather than strictly controlled

research. There is some danger, therefore, in completely accepting such an assumption. On the other hand, experience has shown that such an assumption is likely to be true, and careful observations seem to indicate that the rural setting provides a better opportunity for a tight-knit organization, good social contacts with the students, and better classroom management than does the setting housing many larger operations.

Weaknesses

Finance and Facilities. There is a much larger volume of literature concerning weaknesses of small rural schools than there is regarding the strengths of these schools. This may be due to the fact that weaknesses seem easier to identify and measure.

The foundation of the various weaknesses within the small school system appears to be connected with the lack of funds. This is true, for example, of the lack of adequate facilities that is quite apparent throughout the schools in rural America. Numerous writers have pointed out inadequate and inferior facilities in rural schools. Most of the acute shortages exist in terms of libraries, laboratories, office space, and gymnasiums. Due to the fact that such facilities must serve different functions in the small school, they many times are inferior for a specific purpose.

Problems such as the foregoing, coupled with the fact that the tax burden in rural areas frequently is greater on those whose children are no longer in school, often lead to taxpayer rebellions when it comes to voting on appropriations for rural education. It is extremely important to realize that the major industry in rural areas, that of agriculture, is tied into the individual family farm and thus the individual taxpayer sees the taxes coming off the top of profits from his business.

Then, too, due to the smaller number of students in rural school systems, the cost per student is far larger than in the larger urban or consolidated school systems. A report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969) pointed out that the per-student cost in small schools often may be almost double that of the larger school, and this was substantiated by Clements (1970) and by Mack and Lederman (1969). Unfortunately, per-student cost usually cannot be reduced unless there are larger numbers of students in the small rural school districts. An exception to this, however, was found in a report by the Massachusetts State Board of Education (1968) wherein the reported per-pupil cost in small high schools was approximately $100 less than in the regional high schools due to the much more extensive curricular offerings in the regional schools.

There are also indications that rural people are guilty of "underinvestment" in guidance. This was suggested by Horner (1967), in a review of occupational and educational decision-making of rural youth, and by Swanson (1970) in his discussion of the organization and administration of vocational education in rural areas. An extremely limited tax base, along with the conservative attitude of the majority of rural people concerning investment in the schools, makes it very difficult for the schools to have adequate financing in rural areas.

Mack and Lederman (1969), in their position paper on New York, pointed out that the small schools are hardest hit by change. This is due partly to the fact that hiring adequate staff with different types of abilities is impossible. With shortages of finances and facilities, it is very difficult for the small rural school to change at a rapid rate. There are, however, some cases scattered throughout the nation which show that these disadvantages can be overcome. Excellent examples are Meeker, Colorado, and Wewahitchka, Florida.

Curricular Deficiencies. One of those glaring weaknesses in our rural schools is that of the curriculum. With limited numbers of students and teachers, it is almost impossible to have a broad-based curriculum to give students the opportunity for choice. In many rural high schools throughout the nation, the number of electives is extremely limited. In a summary of the National Working Conference on Solving Educational Problems in Sparsely Populated Areas, Edington and Musselman (1969) made the following observations concerning curriculum in rural schools:

1. limited offerings in curriculum tend to produce a kind of educational prevention;
2. there are extremely limited extra-curricular programs;
3. relevance of courses of study to future requirements is questionable, especially with respect to those students entering post-secondary vocational programs;
4. there is a tendency of small schools to copy large schools' practices and thus a failure to capitalize on small school size in development of curriculum;
5. limited resource personnel are available in the community;
6. a much smaller percentage of rural schools has kindergartens and preschool programs; and
7. program inadequacies are particularly acute in terms of occupational education and guidance.

Swanson (1970) indicated that rural school administrators are under a strain to maintain college-prep programs for the college-bound student and continue to forget the non-college-bound student. This is a great waste, especially in our rural areas where extremely large numbers of students do not go to college. It should also be noted that most administrators and teachers in rural areas have little background or knowledge of vocational education. Furthermore, rural communities do not have the industry to support vocational education programs from outside the school.

Mercure (1967) emphasized the limited program for minority students in the small schools. Especially, there is a lack of Chicano and Black studies. Buckland (1958) indicated that this was not only true for minority students but for all rural students. The failure of rural schools to stimulate cultural and recreational programs is due to a number of reasons. One is lack of finances; another may be that the children must ride busses long distances to school and have no transportation back to school once they are bussed home; furthermore, there is lack of enthusiasm in many rural communities for these types of programs.

Finally, a limited choice of offerings is found in most rural schools. This is especially true of advanced courses in the areas of math and science. Offering more than one foreign language, too, is unheard of in many of the rural schools.

Professional Staff. One of the major weaknesses in the rural schools has been the inability to obtain and keep high-quality staff. This may be alleviated somewhat, however, by an adequate supply of teachers. Often in the past, only those teachers who could not get jobs in urban or suburban areas went to rural areas to teach.

In the report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969), the following inadequacies were listed in terms of qualifications of teachers in rural schools:

1. a disproportionate share of below-standard teachers--including fewer permanent teachers, the lowest rank in terms of regular credentials, a higher incidence of young inexperienced teachers, and the lowest incidence of advanced degrees; and

2. inadequacies of training--including poor training in curricular and guidance principles and recreational activities, inability to recognize health problems, and lack of training to cope with the problems of the rural and small school.

This situation is not unique to Oregon, however. Estes (1967) mentioned that the same situation applies at the national level.

It has also been pointed out that rural teachers lack time and know-how to do the things that are required in rural areas (Berchinal, 1963). The report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969) cited similar problems wherein teachers had inadequate time because of the large number of outside duties, such as supervising study halls. Furthermore, the Oregon report noted that the teaching roles of rural teachers are often multiplied because of the many different preparations required. It is quite common for rural secondary teachers to have as many as five or six different classes with accompanying preparations daily. Rarely in a small school can a teacher use the same lesson plan with more than one class.

A great many teachers in rural America are teaching outside their areas of training. It is quite common for a teacher to teach as many as three or four different areas and to have adequate training in only one or two of these areas. A secondary school with eight or ten teachers may find it impossible to have adequately trained people in all the courses offered. Although consultants might be viewed as a possible solution here, it should be noted that the budget of the school in a small district usually precludes bringing in consultants to keep the teacher training up-to-date. Often, the school that needs consulting help the most gets the least.

A further problem is that what is true of the teacher wanting to move to an urban area is also true of the counselor and administrator. Quite often, principals and superintendents see the rural school only as a stepping stone to a larger district.

Sociocultural Aspects. Many of the problems of rural students seem to relate to family characteristics. For example, Estes (1967) stated that low educational levels of parents seem to be perpetuated in the children. Both Estes and Horner et al. (1967) noted other family characteristics, such as

lack of parental interest in classwork and lack of reading materials in the home, as contributing to unfavorable educational attitudes. Along with this, rural parents generally have less formal education than their urban and suburban counterparts.

Another factor is the severe lack of privacy in personal life for many rural students who have no place of their own in the home to keep books and other belongings.

In addition to the sociocultural patterns within the family, there are sociocultural characteristics of the rural community. It is generally accepted that rural schools are more traditional and resistant to change than are some of their urban counterparts. Widespread poverty in rural areas has hampered education and has had a negative effect on the educational motivation of the people there. Then, too, it was noted by Swanson (1970) that, within the rural areas, there is a social ceiling that makes it impossible for most of the people to orbit out of their social groups; the majority of those who do this leave the rural community.

Practices and Programs to Capitalize on Strengths and Overcome Weaknesses

Many of the innovative practices and programs used in the small school to improve the quality of education seem to be further utilization of practices found to assist the process of education in the larger schools. Through the various programs with which small schools have experimented, a variety of techniques and practices has come into use. Evaluation reports seem to be subjective and, although the practices are considered to be promising, their overall effect has not been measured objectively. Success in helping the small schools seems to be dependent on the adoption of these techniques by other schools not directly involved in the pilot programs.

A report from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (1970) describes 15 promising rural-area practices selected for discussion in the

publication on the basis of two questions: (1) Was there evidence that the practice had potential for improving the climate for learning? and (2) Could the practice be adopted by other small schools with the financial resources available to them?

In broad terms, the various programs and practices that may aid the small school fall under the following general categories: improvement of teacher quality and performance, provision of supporting or shared services, curricular expansion and improvement of classroom organization, and development of community leadership.

Improvement of Teacher Quality and Performance. Possibly the most rewarding of all types of practices and techniques for improvement of the small school are those responsive to improvement of teacher quality and performance. Teacher quality may be linked to two factors beyond the immediate control of the school administrator: (1) program deficiencies in the institutions involved in preparation of teachers and (2) shortcomings in the local socioeconomic environment which preclude the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. While the first of these problems may be solved by bringing pressure to bear upon the teacher-training institutions, the second may require considerable effort, including financial, to permit small schools to compete for quality teachers. This may tend to take care of itself, however, if the adequate supply of teachers continues.

The most immediate returns, however, can be gained from inservice programs for existing teachers and administrators. In a great many cases, the first change that must take place relates to pointing out the need for in-service training to the local educators and the leadership. In this area, small amounts of resources, if managed wisely, can be quite effective. This may be done within a county level, or even a larger district, since a number of teachers and administrators may share the individuals or materials

providing the inservice training. Some financial assistance from state or Federal levels may be necessary to aid the rural school districts in implementing such programs. The "problem districts" could be identified and then massive programs could be initiated in working with the educational personnel to bring about the necessary improvement.

A good example of an inservice program for improving instructional performance of teachers in rural schools was conducted in 1969 by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Codwell, 1969). The purpose of the program was to determine the effects of microteaching on the instructional behavior of rural school teachers. As a result of teachers having had the opportunity to observe and analyze their teaching behavior on videotape, there were significant indications of improvement in instructional skill, teacher attitude, and teacher-pupil interaction.

Provision of Shared Services. A major breakthrough in the broadening and more efficient use of educational resources in rural areas is the "shared-service concept," wherein those types of services that smaller districts are unable to afford are provided over a larger area. This requires that each small district needs to assume only a portion of the costs.

Types of shared services vary widely and may include guidance services; special instructional programs; computer services; school health services; and services of consultants, coordinators, and supervisors. Growing very steadily in this area are programs that are transported from one school to another. For example, audiovisual services have been supplied to many small schools on a cooperative basis.

Another type of program that may be shared is the inservice training program for teachers, wherein an intermediate unit, county, service center,

or other type of unit may provide inservice programs for teachers in the area. Many states--such as Texas, Nebraska, South Carolina, Michigan, and New York--have made these types of units legal by legislation. The units are organized in different ways in the various states and may or may not have taxing power. In some places, the policy-making boards are lay people, while in other areas the boards are composed of representatives of the school districts involved.

A very effective resource that these units have been able to provide is that of information. Many of the units serve as resource centers and have ERIC files as well as other types of materials available for use by students and teachers.

Another concept within the realm of shared services is that of sharing the students. For example, students may travel from one district to another in order to receive certain types of programs. This is reciprocal in that one small district may have one type of program and another district may have another type of program, with students switching districts to attend those schools offering programs to meet the students' needs.

Curricular Expansion and Improvement. In keeping with the previous discussion on the trend toward ungraded classrooms with individualized instruction, it should be noted that intensive inservice programs are necessary in order to prepare the teachers for doing what needs to be done in rural schools. Further, it is extremely important that proper types of materials be provided for rural teachers since it is often extremely difficult for them to develop materials for themselves. If proper advantage is taken of those materials that have already been developed, perhaps curricular innovations will result when students in an individualized program have materials that are related to their interests. In this fashion,

it is possible that individualized instruction can give breadth to the very narrow curriculum found in the majority of rural schools.

Another area that needs further study is that of cooperative education. Although there are very limited work stations for students in most small towns, better utilization could be made of existing stations. Summer programs could be implemented wherein students work at industrial sites or military installations in nearby communities.

It is extremely important that adequate vocational education programs be provided for the rural student since it is the person from a rural area who goes to the city who has added most to the unemployment in the past. Although at this time it is probably impossible to provide the rural student with very narrow specific skill training in many areas, it is possible to provide exploratory types of programs and basic core curriculum in certain occupational areas. Then, after the student leaves the secondary school, he can go to an urban area with preparation for more specialized training or for on-the-job experience.

A few State Departments of Education have recognized the dilemma of providing adequate vocational programs in rural schools. One of the leaders is Utah, which has developed specific curricular materials for the small high school (Wasden, 1970). Also, a recent set of guidelines for establishing cooperative programs in small schools is found in Cooperative Vocational Education in Small Schools: A Suggested Guide for Program Planning, published by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (1972) in conjunction with the University of Nebraska.

Another area that has not caught on as rapidly in rural schools as it has in other schools is the use of paraprofessionals and instructional aides. This releases the teacher from many mundane duties and allows for more constructive use of teacher time.

Effective Practices

Use of Technology. A real possibility for improving instruction in the rural schools is that of taking advantage of modern educational technology such as educational television. Although educational television programs are usually not geared specifically for the rural school, much can be done in this area. In the future, there could be extended usage in remote areas of television satellites that have been placed in our outer atmosphere. Each state or group of states could develop specific programs for remote rural schools.

Videotape materials, too, could be used much more extensively in rural schools. And, use of amplified telephones is also coming into being since it is quite inexpensive to bring in a speaker or expert by use of the telephone; the speaker lectures, and all classes can hear and question him. A pilot program that linked several Colorado schools used the conference-call method to transmit instruction in American history. The instructor was located in his office at Gunnison, while the students remained in their classrooms in the small schools ranging as far away as 265 miles.

Computer-assisted instruction is another possibility for using technology to improve the small school program. In the past, the majority of such programs have been implemented in large urban or suburban schools. However, such programs could be applied in rural schools. A central computer could serve hundreds of small schools efficiently and at fairly low cost per student.

Experiences Beyond the Classroom. Numerous learning activities do not necessarily have to be carried out on the school campus. For years, Australia has used radio and extensive correspondence courses in working with students in extremely isolated areas. Likewise in rural America, certain types of correspondence courses could be sent from a central area

to the small isolated school and, under the direction of an aide or teacher, could be given to the students. Correspondence-like courses could also be conducted via radio or television.

More interschool visitations could broaden education for rural students. Along these same lines, Ford (1961), in his book Rural Renaissance. Revitalizing Small High Schools, mentioned the possibility of out-of-school seminars wherein small groups of students are brought together for a short period of time for intensive training.

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory conducted a child-centered, home-oriented program delivered by means of television broadcasts, home visitations, mobile classrooms, and other media. The program involved building a curriculum based on behavioral objectives for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds living in rural Appalachia.

Development of Community Leadership. Numerous agencies in addition to the schools carry out educational programs in rural communities. The rural school should coordinate efforts with agencies such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, VISTA, the Agricultural Extension Service, and the Job Corps. Pinnock (1967) stressed the fact that there are hundreds of educational opportunities provided by various community action programs. The U. S. Office of Education's Report of the Task Force on Rural Education (1969) indicated that much more attention could be given to adult education programs and that these in turn could help the effectiveness of the regular school program.

Considerations for Administrators of Small Schools

One of the major factors limiting education in the country today is the resources. Since money for financing schools is not unlimited, every effort should be made to spend existing funds in the most efficient manner and to

make renewed effort to secure additional funds for schools in rural America. First of all, however, specific educational needs that are unique to rural America must be identified--probably at the state or national level. Coupled with this, a program is suggested to motivate not only the educators but also the local lay leaders of rural America toward changing and upgrading their educational programs. Unfortunately, at present, many people in rural America are content with status quo and are afraid that change would destroy what they consider to be good.

In summary, the rural school administrator should give priority to the following activities:

1. capitalizing on what is known concerning individualized instruction by having individualized materials available in the schools;

2. providing inservice training for rural school teachers, administrators, and supporting staff to make them aware of the types of materials that are available for student use (this should also help to upgrade methods and techniques as well as to prepare rural educators for using these materials);

3. familiarizing rural educators with existing service centers in their areas so that the possibilities of developing cooperative programs and shared services are explored; and

4. implementing intensive statewide or nationwide recruitment programs to encourage young teachers to go and stay in rural America.

Many suggestions made in this paper do not call for substantial amounts of money, although, where rural districts have developed effective educational programs, some additional funds are needed. Intensive study needs to be made in each situation, however, to determine how existing resources can be used most wisely. In many cases, existing programs might need to be eliminated in order to use all resources most effectively to bring about positive educational change in rural America.

After the address those present divided and met for small group discussions related to the keynote topic. Leaders for the discussions included: Roy Bowen, Lee Davis, Claude Collins, Clay Neeley, Bill Coffield, David Craig, Wayne Johnson, John Lovell, Bill Poppen, Tom Ryan, and Carroll Hall. During the reporting session which followed, each group shared what was identified as two primary strengths and two priority needs of small schools in Tennessee.

POLITICAL REALITIES

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This was one of six small group sessions at which a concept presentation was made to define and develop discussion which was directed toward the identification of two key issues and examination of the implications for public education. - Ed. Note

The following outline by Beth Freeman was the guide used for discussion:

I. Introduction

II. Qualification of the superintendent

III. Duties of the superintendent (as set forth by Tennessee Code Annotated)

IV. Role of the candidate in regard to seeking the political office, such as the Superintendent:

1. Political backing
2. Establishment of goals and/or objectives
3. Actual selling of these goals and/or objectives to the public
4. Personal ability of the candidate to persuade public opinion to his/her side

Recognizing the basic inequalities in the capacity of different school districts to raise revenues, and the difficulty that some school districts have in raising sufficient funds for even a "minimum" program, states have historically provided funds to school districts to supplement their locally raised revenues. Most states have distributed some funds as a flat grant to school districts, which means that an equal dollar amount per pupil is distributed to every school district in the state regardless of its wealth or poverty; through a formula which attempts to equalize on the basis of the fiscal ability or capacity of a district to raise local revenues; or some combination of the above.

The current state education formulas are inadequate from a number of standpoints:

1. The fact that the formula maintains the heavy reliance on the local property tax result, as already noted, in inequalities due to the differences in the underlying tax base, in assessment practices, and in tax rates.

2. The fact that many of these formulas include a flat grant to all districts regardless of fiscal capacity, helps to maintain the gap between wealthy and poorer districts.

3. Most state aid formulas do not take into account differences in the cost among districts for the same service.

4. Inadequate measures of fiscal need are incorporated in the formulae. State aid equalizing formulas are usually based on property wealth which frequently does not correlate with individual income. This is an important factor in the ability of a district to tax itself.

5. The existing distribution formulas generally do not take into account factors realting to the higher cost of educating certain types of children.

This paper will focus upon the economic conditions reflected in the rural communities of Tennessee. One measure of ability to support education and other governmental services is the effective tax rate. The mean effective tax rate for the state is $.88. Contrary to popular belief it is not

the wealthy counties that have a higher effective tax rate--it is the rural counties that are extending a greater effort. This indicates that the present state programs are ineffective in equalizing governmental services.

These same rural counties are losing populations. Particularly at the age level that can contribute to the economic level of the community.

Tennessee lags behind the Southeast and the United States in gain in per capita personal income. The median family income for Tennessee is $7,447 with 18.2% of the population below poverty level. The rural counties have the lowest family incomes and the highest poverty level.

The average weekly wage in Tennessee is $127. Again the rural counties are below this figure.

What does all this mean for educators? First, Tennessee ranks sixth in the Southeast in teachers' salaries, ninth in current expenditure per pupil, tenth in federal revenue receipts for education, and ninth in state revenue expended for education. If we are to equalize conditions throughout the state more revenues must come from the state and federal level. These funds must be appropriated in such a way as to have major equalizing effect.

Roy Bowen, Supervisor of Program Development, Roane County Schools, Kingston, Tennessee served as recorder for this interest group and provided the following summary.

The emphasis in the discussion of the financial dilemma of school districts centered on two major concerns:

1. the factors contributing to the inadequacies of financial support for education in small schools and
2. what remedial actions can/should be taken to reduce the existing inequalities.

Presumptions Relating to Concerns. The present foundation program discriminates against the rural school system. The formula requires that any loss, based on ADA, must be made up from local funds increasing the disparity between small and larger systems.

Students are not born in multiples of 30 and some ratio flexibility should be included in applicable regulations.

The foundation program assumes that all program efforts cost essentially the same amounts.

More dependence should be placed on the wealth of the state for underwriting bond issues for local educational facilities.

The cost of capital outlay should be pupil based on a ratio by program requirement, i.e. as in special education.

Financial difficulties of rural schools have increased due to shifts in assessed value of property under classification system imposed by "Question 3" implementation.

Population shifts from rural to urban results in further economic deprivation of rural counties/systems. Fewer people must bear an increasing tax burden resulting in higher effective tax rates in rural than in urban areas.

Legislative and State Board of Education regulations and requirements are often imposed without providing sufficient funds to meet minimum standards.

Some Suggested Approaches. The establishment of a state wide organization of superintendents to influence legislation before it is mandated into law. Such an organization should establish appropriate rapport with the legislative membership.

The above organization should establish a means of having proper input into State Board of Education policies prior to adoption.

Consolidation and/or combinations of school districts, where such combinations can create more economically efficient operating units while retaining any strengths inherent in smallness.

A revision of the Foundation Program based on Average Daily Membership (ADM) full time equivalents and including cost differentials for the providing of educational services.

Foundation revision should further be based on the wealth of the state (both property and income) and tax structures revised accordingly while retaining provision for local support incentives.

Foundation program revisions should recognize services and facilities (transportation and capital outlay) as not related to instruction but rather related to population density, and program cost differentials.

Foundation program revisions should further incorporate a minimum salary schedule provision based on a quality of education index and a cost of living index.

Consideration should be given to procedures for constituting the State Board of Education (elective vs. appointive) to increase responsiveness of the board to the electorate.

THE EDUCATIONAL SCENE

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This was one of six small group sessions at which a concept presentation was made to define and develop discussion which was directed toward the identification of two key issues and the examination of the implications for public education. - Ed. Note.

The Current Status of Public Education in Small Schools in Tennessee

Institutions have always been an expression of their own culture in that they have responded to the context in which they existed. Generally, schools have a stronger influence on people than most other institutions for the simple reason that nearly everyone has attended one. Because of the importance placed on education by our society, these influences have a life-lasting effect.

Small schools, here defined as those having eight or fewer teachers, are very prevalent in Tennessee. During the 1972-73 school year there were 339 such schools, excluding kindergarten centers, operating in our state. More than ninety-five percent of them were located in rural areas-some in isolated communities. Why is it that communities have such close ties with small schools and fight to defend and keep them open even when many knowledgeable experts recommend closing them? There are many reasons which can be considered as either strengths or weaknesses, depending on how one feels about the subject. Some of them are as follows:

Value Dilemmas. The small school has a deep personal meaning to community members. Particularly in rural areas, the school, like the church, is a major point of community pride. In many instances, there are only a few or perhaps no other organizations to fulfill the special needs of the community. The school may be used for a meeting place or a source of recreation for individuals, civic clubs and other organizations or as a gathering place for major community events.

Coupled with a sense of pride is a feeling of contempt for the large school which may be located several miles from the local community. This contempt may stem from the common feeling of competition between rural and city communities. Questions of immediate concern when a larger school

is considered are as follows:

> Would members of the small community have as much input into what happens in a large school located in another area as they would in a small school located in their community?
>
> Would the children be bussed long distances from their homes to attend a large school if small schools were closed?
>
> What additional problems such as racial, sexual and drug problems would children face if they had to attend a large school outside their own community?
>
> Can a large school give as much individual attention to the children as a small school?

Leadership Vacuum. The educational leader in a small school directs the entire operation of that school. This is critical, especially in the area of curriculum development. Questions in this area needing answers are as follows:

> Will highly trained, qualified personnel be available to small communities to serve in positions of superintendent, principal, and teacher?
>
> Can a small community attract outstanding educators who can demand and receive bigger salaries in large city schools?
>
> Is it as important to have good leadership in a small school as in a large school?

Power Structures. Small schools can be a base of power for some individuals in a community. A person in such a position can often employ and dismiss school personnel and influence most other decisions affecting the school. These decisions, of course, affect the rest of the community. Power is usually hard to obtain. Once gained, it is not easily relinguished. Two major questions are:

> Does the small school always benefit from educational decisions made by individuals who hold positions of power but may not really be interested in a quality education program?
>
> Does the small school differ from the large school in this respect?

Finance. Inflation has pushed construction costs higher than ever before. It costs more to build a new school than it once did. When a new school is constructed, taxes go up. Answers must be provided to questions such as:

Is it worth the cost in dollars to close a small school which is operational in favor of constructing a newer, larger school?

Related to educational expenditures, can a large school offer as much as a small school in terms of educational quality?

Space and Equipment. The small school may be located on a craggy hillside with barely enough room outside the building for a set of steep steps to the front door or in a meadow with enough room for two softball fields and a basketball court. The school may have six rooms and a bath or two rooms and a path. It may be equipped with shiny new round tables and individual chairs or with old iron and wooden desks that must remain in rows because the seats are attached to the fronts of the desks. In the classroom there may be no equipment other than the coal-burning stove, student desks, teachers desk and the paddle or there may be an overhead projector, slide projector, record player and television set.

Following are some questions that arise concerning space and equipment:

Is there adequate space for physical activities, games and sports?

Is there adequate space and equipment for variety in teaching techniques?

Is the equipment appropriate for the particular students and teachers to whom it is available?

Is the play area safe for young children and is appropriate equipment provided?

Teaching Time and Expertise. The staff of a small school may consist entirely of one teacher for the "little grades" (1-4) and one teacher for

the "big grades" (5-8) who also serves as principal, janitor and softball and basketball coach. Or it may consist of a teacher for each grade, a cook, several paraprofessional aides, and possibly some college or university student teachers. All of the teachers may be certified to teach one subject such as English but in reality must teach everything from first-grade reading to fourth-grade mathematics or from fifth-grade social studies to eighth-grade science. Possibly some or all teachers are not certified at all.

Some questions relating to teaching time and expertise in the small school are:

> Does the teacher have adequate time to teach the necessary content in several grades?
>
> Does the teacher have the expertise to organize teaching tasks so that opportunities exist for all pupils to progress as rapidly and as far as they are capable of progressing?
>
> Does the teacher have access to other staff personnel in planning and implementing routine and creative learning activities?
>
> Does the teacher utilize paraprofessional and other additional personnel effectively?
>
> Does the teacher have time, money and opportunities for professional growth and self-renewal through contact with other educators?

Values, leadership, power structure, finance, space and equipment, and teacher time and expertise may constitute strengths or needs depending on the individual small school under consideration, for, like the larger schools, small schools have diverse characteristics. However, some strengths and needs may be identified as those which tend to be characteristic of small schools. Some such strengths include scheduling flexibility, potential for flexibility in the curriculum, closeness of teacher-pupil relationships, teacher knowledge of student needs, and community interest in and respect for the school. With such strengths

it would appear that education in the small schools would be innovative, humane, and professional. However, there are needs that often offset or negate the strengths.

Perhaps the greatest need characteristic of small schools is provision for continued professional growth and self-renewal of the classroom teachers. Most of the teachers do not live in close proximity to a college or university. Therefore, the opportunity for the teacher to take courses exists only in the summer at which time the teacher often must find employment in order to survive. Those who do not work usually have family obligations which makes it impossible for them to spend a summer on campus. So teacher contact with other educators is usually limited to pre-and post-school inservice meetings and to consultants who appear on a one or two day basis and often present "canned" speeches or workshops which do not focus on the particular needs of those teachers.

There is a need for programs which provide continued contact between educators in the small schools and in the teacher education field. This contact could take the form of remote undergraduate and graduate courses, graduate student laboratory experiences in the small schools on a regular and continued basis, student teaching programs in the small schools, workshops planned jointly by small schools classroom teachers and consultants--any program which would be designed specifically for the small school, involves the classroom teacher in planning it, operates on a continuing basis, and is conducted close enough to the teachers involved so that time, cost, and family obligations would not be prohibitive.

Perhaps the most important question that must be asked in planning any program for maximizing opportunities in small school education is this: What effects change and what impedes change in the small school?

And more important than asking the question is asking it of the people who know: the teachers in small schools. This paper will not attempt to answer the question, merely to ask it of the classroom teacher: *What causes changes in your school? What causes resistance to change in your school?* And one thing more: *What can be done to help?*

SOCIAL VALUES IN RURAL TENNESSEE

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This was one of six small group sessions at which a concept presentation was made to define and develop discussion which was directed toward the identification of two key issues and the examination of the implications for public education. - Ed. Note.

ADDENUM

Proceedings Small Schools Invitational Conference - Montgomery Bell State Park, November 29-30, 1973.

ED. NOTE - -
Editorial development of the Proceedings included an original version of the paper Values and the Rural School by Karl J. Jost. The expanded paper which more nearly parallels the small group session presentation is now made available. Please consider this complete paper as a replacement for pages 52-57 in the report which you recently received. K. O'F.

VALUES AND THE RURAL SCHOOL (K.J.J.)

An assumption concerning the nature of the participants in a rural education seminar would indicate that the majority of people in attendance at these meetings have either a deep understanding of the nature of rural education in America or an emotional commitment to the rural segment of our society. Therefore, rather than burden you with a sociological, statistical, or descriptive analysis of the condition of rural education, I think we might best spend our time attempting to build a new framework within which we can analyze the position of rural education in the mass society of modern America. As in so many of our institutions, the value system that we use in approaching the institution has precious little to do with the reality of the environment in which that institution exists. We do know that only 10 per cent of farm boys and girls can hope to make a good income on the farm in 1973. We do know that most young people from rural schools are going to leave their home areas and seek employment elsewhere. We do know that we are highly concerned that this rural student will not be able to compete in urban society because the urban society is more verbal than the rural, is more contractual in a legal sense, is more impersonal, time-oriented, and vocationally specialized. We applaud the joys and the values of rural life: man in communion with the land, independent, and respectful of his fellow man for his competence rather than his certifications. But we feel that like primitive tribes, this rural idealism, lovely as it is, is due to pass from the American scene. In book after book after speech after article, one finds these types of ideas being presented to the school people of both rural and urban America. If sociology of education has anything to offer in this conference in regard to this problem,

it is to demonstrate with research that all of the above assumptions are pure nonsense.

Christopher Jencks, Daniel Moynihan, Robert O'Reilly, in their landmark studies on social class and racism in the American schools have demonstrated with strong evidence that the ability of the school to change significantly the occupational status, the income status, or the attitude structure of children is extremely low, and that we might better concentrate our efforts on viewing the school as an extremely important part of a child's life for itself alone, rather than constantly viewing this institution in terms of what it will do for the child in his later life. In essence, is it possible to function as John Dewey would suggest, and that for a child to spend one-fifth of his life in a school is an important event, standing alone, and need not be justified solely in futuristic terms. The first and most salient point, and possibly the only point that is agreed upon by researchers in the field of education is that two variables and only two consistently affect the child's success in the schools throughout the nation. They are the innate ability of the child to learn and the attitude of the home toward education. All other variables are either applicable only to particular situations or are spurious at best. They have no national application. If then the home and the social system are educators, what effects do the home, the popular media, particularly television, and the youth's peer groups have on molding that child for life in modern America?

To answer that, let me return to my earlier statements describing the rural youth attempting to approach urban society. "The Roper poll, working for the National Committee for Children and Youth, discovered in their survey that the possibility is good that there is no longer a significant difference between rural and urban youth as to problems, attitudes and

aspirations. The poll found negligible differences in the two groups of young people in their opinions about jobs, morality, civil rights, future opportunities, juvenile delinquency, etc."[1] (Ruth Cown Nash, Rural Youth in a Changing Environment, 1965, p. 131.) The author attributes this attitude similarity of urban and rural youth almost exclusively to the influence of television since the late 1940's on rural areas. When contrasting attitudes with behaviors however, it is quite true that when comparing these two groups, the urban youth is more highly verbal, is more impersonal and time-oriented, and is more occupationally specialized and contractual in his view of other human beings, and that this does represent a difficulty to the rural youth. I cannot understand why the urban society views these characteristics as advantageous. Spend a few days with a highly verbal, impersonal and time-oriented specialist, contracting all his relationships and I would suggest that it is a relationship about as bereft of all human content as any I can imagine. What we seem to be doing continually is taking the time-honored American ideal of progress and upward mobility and making educational decisions based on that value system. I refer you to the titles of the various projects that have attempted to bring the culturally disadvantaged child up to the level of urban America. Isn't culturally disadvantaged a lovely term? It says so much about the way we view people living in a situation or a culture other than the majority culture. We have projects Head Start, Upward Bound, teaching the culturally disadvantaged, the learning disabled, the socially disabled, the culturally deprived. What are the assumptions behind these terms. The projects are usually stated in operational terms or behavioral objectives. Rarely do we plumb the depth of meaning behind the project itself. Head Start--I guess you were behind; Upward Bound--

I guess you were down; culturally disabled--we can make you culturally healthy. In terms of what? What is the base line? I think the evidence is clear that the base line is the majority urban-suburban culture of America. If this analysis then is accurate, what role is left for the rural school? If home, the media, the peer group overwhelm any attitudinal differences that the school can make, as Jencks and Moynihan argue, are we then saying that the situation is hopeless; that the school is non-functional other than to exist as a holding pattern in which we can place students until adolescence happily passes? Quite the contrary; this is not a rationale to do nothing. It is a rationale to do just about anything that strikes our fancy as being creative, joyful, innovative, stimulating. It is an excuse to turn the schools and their one-fifth claim on the life of its clients into extremely pleasant, useful places. My thesis today is that that job may not be as difficult as the one faced by our urban brethren. In any social institution, two factors directly affect the quality of the institution. They are the primary group and the structure. As the urban school becomes larger and larger, as the urban university changes from a center of learning to a mega-gas station, as the technical gadgetry of education becomes more and more prevalent in our schools, we find that structure begins to overwhelm the primary groups, that the institution takes on a life of its own and the one-to-one personal relationships of the participants become secondary. Until now, rural education has managed to avoid that problem. This is known in urban sociology as the Charleston, South Carolina syndrome or "There are times when poverty can save you."

The rural schools, like Charleston, could go back to a primary groups emphasis; the old model was still there. Neither Charleston nor the rural schools had over the years the money to change or obliterate the old model.

Before we become absurdly enthusiastic about the glories of poverty, let me develop that argument in slightly more theoretical terms.

The rural school may well revolve on the sacramental character of the person and the rituals and rules which guard that character. If Jencks and Moynihan are correct the urban educational enterprise has become a "churched" institution promising social and individual secular salvation; to promise less would lose the converts. Suddely we realize we cannot deliver the promises and as the "school"-church loses its force, the individual is thrown back upon himself and rediscovers his own resources. This is the basic message of Goodman, Silberman, Holt and all the neo-humanists so popular but unapplied today.

An application of the sociological research of the past twenty years and the rational acceptance of a viable rural value approach to man, not far removed from the neo-humanist position, would be interesting indeed:

Reopen the little red schoolhouse. Much data indicates that physical plant has little correlation with student learning and older teachers do feel they have seen the open classroom concept somewhere before. Better yet, let the students build the school as has been done in vocational education projects in communities such as Aspen, Colorado. The structural possibilities for low-cost creativity are untapped and endless but can the primary group tap the positive aspect of rural value systems for acceptance in the mass society?

The answer, if we are serious about all this, lies outside the school. The schools of rural America and Appalachia are serving political functions in that the schools represent an alien but controlling middle class ethos in a lower class rural society. Those of you who have successful careers and stay in the mountains can be expected to become leaders of Appalachia. I hope not, for I believe we have too many leaders in Appalachia already.

"There are too many now who believe they know what is best for the area and for the people. Most of these so-called leaders or experts are trained as I am trained, and as you will be trained, to think only as middle class people with middle class values and middle class ways. Because of this, I would say that many of Appalachia's problems result from the fact that its leaders are middle class and formally educated. But for the working class, the unemployed, the subsistence farmer, the people who barely get by, the old ways and values are still a living thing, and the relationships based on an agrarian society are not so easily discarded despite the invasion of roads, and schools, and TV sets.

Our real problem in Appalachia is not whether or not the old culture will die--only time will decide that now--but whether or not mountain people can begin to find ways to deal directly with the political and economic forces which are at work in Appalachia and in the rest of the country." 11 (2)

Historically, people who want change in this country have worked with the people who are most obviously oppressed. The blacks of the cities, the Indians of the reservation, the American labor poor, the major thrust has been to assist these people in entering the mainstream, or if you will, the middle class of American society. To reform Appalachia, and to reform rural America is to kill the culture, if by reform we mean the merging of that culture with the middle class. As one friend in Oakdale, Tennessee, put it succinctly: "We fight desperately for our fundamental religion because its the only area in America where we have a chance of succeeding and surviving. Religion just isn't important enough for the organized churches to bring the pressure to bear on our society that is brought to bear by politics, economics, and social values." He was wrong. The snake handlers of Newport, Tennessee are now being legislated out of their worship, and to the eternal credit of the American Civil Liberties Union they are being defended by that organization.

Clark, Mike, Education and Exploitation: A Monograph of the Highlander Center; New Market, Tennessee.

If there is a salient point to working in Appalachia and the rural areas, it may be stated best by Mike Clark, the director of Highlander Center, who said, "Poor people because of their economic experience look for action, not talk. In order to survive they must become experts in judging people's motives and designs. They may not always make the best decisions for themselves in the long run, but they are usually accurate in judging who has the power and who will use the axe if and when it falls." Using that statement and this model, I would argue that for entirely non-malevolent reasons, education in our society means control, not freedom for the rural and Appalachian school. This thesis is developed in great detail by Donhoff in his book, Who Rules America?. My answer then to our problem and to this situation is as follows: the rural culture, the Appalachian culture of America has an inalienable right to survive. There is no empirical data to indicate one culture's superiority to another other than the test of survival. If the people are still alive and are emotionally secure and are surviving, the culture is a success. Using this criterion, we may find rural and Appalachian culture much more successful than middle class industrial, gadgeted America, as the power shortage slows and then inexorably collapses our machine technology. Granting this culture survival how then can we educate? I would suggest the following non-dramatic, easily applied, low funded, attempts at coming to grips with the primary group relationships of rural Ameria. It seems to me that the structure of education that we so gleefully enjoy changing in bits and pieces might be adequate to the occasion, and that it is our attitudes much more so than the structure that cause difficulty to the rural and Appalachian child in the public school.

1. Remove as much as possible the public school from the political arena. The elected superintendency must go. In a complex society we must

try and make educational decisions somewhat removed from immediate political consequences.

2. If you find that impossible, go completely political and attack the economic and social condition of your particular areas in such a way that the material benefits accrue to the people, the workers, and not the business community leaders.

3. Appropriate to numbers 1. and 2. the school could become political to guarantee itself adequate funding. A case in point: only one in ten businesses in Roane County, Tennessee is on the tax rolls. In Morgan County, Tennessee four companies own 38% of the total land and pay only 4% of the total taxes. In Anderson County, large landholding companies with extensive strip-mining holdings have lower tax assessments than do farmers and homeowners. All of this directly affects the ability of the social welfare services of an area to survive.

4. Educate for what is needed. A number of studies have been done indicating a very low correlation between courses taken in high school and success in college, the Arkansas studies being the most famous of these. The school could come to grips with the knowledge involved in food growing and food processing and teach these courses as part of an ecologically united school curriculum. The Foxfire books have given us all a fascinating example of the enormous knowledge children can obtain in their own local area and how that knowledge can be applied to their own well-being and development.

5. In the method of the Foxfire book recognize that the rural community is a sociology workship. The people are excellent teachers of their culture. If a college student wishes to work in a rural school,

can minimal funding be provided that school to allow the teacher to teach only one quarter or one-half day the first year and spend the rest of the time researching in great depth the parameters of value and goals of that community? This combined with a series of courses at the university geared to the understanding of the rural area would be an enormous asset to both the community and the teacher. This procedure has already begun at the University of Tennessee where a very loosely organized non-funded program in Appalachian studies exists within the department of Curriculum and Instruction.

6. Bundle up most of the funded experts from the university and their funded programs and as gently as possible, throw them out, unless the program deposits the majority of those funds in the community and with the people. If you ever wish to entertain yourself in a grimly ludicrous sort of way, pick an area in which you truly know what you are talking about, then follow the paid consultants in that area around the county or the state; this should supply you with enough humor and positive ego support to yourself to guarantee your emotional survival for a number of years. A case in point: a number of the social foundations professors at the University of Tennessee were invited to speak to a group in a rural county on humanism in the schools. This conference was set up by one of the departments in our College of Education. While speaking to the people in the workshops in the conference, we noticed an unwillingness on the part of the teachers to comment and to participate, and we also noticed that the attendance of the teachers at the meeting was 100%. With a little probing, we discovered that the teachers had to attend that conference on humanism because their checks for the month were being passed out at the conference; at the end of that conference, and if they were not in attendance, they would personally have to pick up their checks from the school principal's office. Would you hazard a guess concerning the

influence we had that day for an increase in humanism in the schools. It was a classic study of the sociology of the absurd, and this goes on all the time.

7. Referring to the above, help the people, the teachers, and the administrators of rural America to realize that they as well as anyone know how to function in a school system in their society. Instead of showing everyone how to improve, let these people suggest how they think they can or should change and then supply them the information they want and need, not the information we think they should have.

8. Set up a series of student, teacher, and professor exchanges with rural schools. If a person wished to establish a career in our rural areas, that preparation very easily could include personnel exchanges with urban schools and urban universities. The University of North Dakota Experiemtnal College of Education is applying this at present. We have a proposal to establish a house in New York City for Appalachian students to partake in that culture and for New Yorkers to spend time in the Appalachian society.

The point to be made in these suggestions, which could go on at great length, is that all of these are in operation somewhere in our country. All of these are functioning with a minimum of funds and all of them are enjoying some success in developing a series of attitudes that view rural and Appalachian America as merely another equal cultural entity of our society. The Carnegie Commission of Education has recently encouraged us to start thinking small. One can think small and have enormous activities going on. I developed, and we have run a program in Morgan County, Tennessee for the past three years. During that time, approximately three hundred and fifty students have gone to three schools every week, every quarter, and spent four hours a day working with the teachers of

these rural Appalachian schools and their students. Three professors have also been involved, also making the weekly trip to these schools. We all became very effective when our philosophy turned to serving a function roughly equivalent to a supply sergeant. The people tell us what they need, and if it isn't nailed down at the university, we borrow it, obtain it, or steal it, and get it to the county. Firm friendships have developed. The ability of all the groups to communicate is fairly well established. Our presence has outlasted many federally funded projects in the area and our total funding to date has been $100 and the weekly use of a state car. All other resources are volunteered by the students in their car pools, by the faculty who have gotten to know any number of students by driving them to the county, and by the good citizens who have loaned pickup trucks, paneled trucks and cars to bring students to the university for various cultural events.

In conclusion, therefore, what I suggest can be done. I think what we are doing is mildly useful, and most importantly, we are all having an enjoyable time doing it.

The science of identifying community influence and power has developed rapidly in the last twenty years. At least four major approaches are currently being used, but the Bonjean approach is probably the most accurate and most feasible. The session included discussion of procedures for adapting this approach for use over a long period of time in a gradual and constant development of school officials.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

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This was one of six small group sessions at which a concept presentation was made to define and develop discussion which was directed toward the identification of two key issues and the examination of the implications for public education. - Ed. Note.

Since County and State school systems and the schools of small school districts cannot be isolated from the population behavior and changes of the nation, we must first try to indicate some of the major population trends taking place in the nation.

1. The nation ranks fourth among the great powers of the world, its population being exceeded by China, India, and the U.S.S.R.

2. Currently, the nation is growing annually at the rate of 1.7 million from natural increases, and some 370,000 from net immigrations.

3. The nation now has one of the lowest birth rates in history. The availability of birth control information and means, and attitude studies of young people indicating the children they desire to have, indicate that a low birth rate is likely to characterize the population until 1980 at least. Recent birth and death rate trends also substantiate this conclusion.

Period (Average annual)	Births (Per 1,000 population)	Death rates (Per 1,000 population)	Natural Increase
1935-35	18.8	11.0	7.8
1945-49	24.1	10.1	14.0
1955-59	24.8	9.4	14.4
1965-69	18.3	9.5	8.8

Number of Children Expected by Young Wives, 1967-72

Age of Wives	Expecting 2 or less	
	1972	1967
18-24 years	70%	45%
25-29 years	60%	37%
30-34 years	45%	35%
	Expecting 3 or more	
13-24 years	30%	54%
25-29 years	40%	63%
30-34 years	55%	65%

4. While a nation has a high rate of poulation increase during the period of high sustained birth rates following World War II, the rate of increase toward 1990 is likely to be substantial but much slower than in the years after 1945.

Year	The Nation Population (millions)
1950	152
1960	180
1970	204
(Projection)	
1975	215-218
1980	227-237
1985	240-258
1990	251-278

5. While Congress could increase its immigration quotas at any time there is little evidence that they will go above 400,000 annually. The reasons are largely economic.

6. Population growth for the last two decades has been heavy in metropolitan areas (places with one or more central cities of 50,000 or more) plus the contiguous counties economically integrated around them.

   Central cities of metropolitan areas in the South and West increased in population between 1960-70. Central cities lost population in the East and North Central states. Southern and Western cities are generally newer and annexation laws less rigid. This accounts for much of their growth.

7. Currently the population is about 73.5 urban (living in places of 2,500 or more), 26.5 percent rural, of which 5 percent (10 million out of 208 million) are rural farm. The rural farm population may decline to 3 percent by 1980.

8. Blacks are increasing faster than whites.

9. Persons over 65 increased from 3 million in 1900 to 20 million in 1970 and are expected to increase to 29 million in 1980.

10. Non-metropolitan counties having the greatest population increase between 1960 and 1970 were those:

    1. on interstate highways
    2. those counties that had colleges
    3. those that had military installations

    County seat towns have higher growth rates than did non-county seat towns. Why?

11. Any small town is likely to grow:

    1. if it offers jobs
    2. if it offers housing and is within commuting distance of work
    3. if it is on good roads
    4. if it offers adequate sewage and water facilities
    5. if it offers services or amenities (including schools) which people desire
    6. if it is central to a population to be served
    7. if it has land for development at moderate cost
    8. if it has a dynamic leadership

12. Valuable sources of population data for small school systems include:

    1. County data from the Census Bureau and U. T. bureaus
    2. Census data for enumeration districts by Counties
    3. County and area population studies made by the development districts, councils of government and Tennessee State Planning leaders. More and more services are being planned on the basis of the nine development districts.
    4. School population data from numerous sources but originating with the State Department of Education
    5. Birth and death rate trend data from the Division of Vital Statistics of the Tennessee Department of Health
    6. County population projections from telephone companies
    7. Construction data from Home Builders Association and Building Inspectors office and trade magazines.

13. Population projection, even short range ones, are difficult to make for small towns, rural areas and even counties. New home contruction, new industrial plants and job opportunities generate

people. People go where the houses, jobs, roads and schools are. Windshield surveys are often as functional as statistics as are postal service maps and air photos.

14. Any service area in which the people live and work together has a reasonable chance for developing into a functional community. This is especially true of school service areas. The school is one of the few institutions left around which people can organize.

15. Mobile people may have ties to more than one community and not be tied closely to any. A viable community or institution may compete effectively for the allegiences of people who have split-allegiences to communities or weak ties to institutions.

16. Much work is being done on the relationship between the size of institutions and their impact upon programs and people. For example, Gump compared large and small high schools in Kansas and came up with the following conclusions:

    1. The larger the school the more the variety of instruction offered. However, it takes an average of a 100 percent increase in school size to yield a 17 percent increase in variety of courses. Furthermore, there is no clear indication that the greater variety in the large schools results in the average student experiencing a broader range of academic classes.

    2. Students in the larger school participate in a few more out-of-class activities than do students in the small school. On the other hand, students in the smaller schools participate in more different kinds of activity settings (8.6 as compared to 3.5).

    3. Students in the small schools participate in over double the number of performances of students in the larger schools. The chance to be essential, to gain the active or demanding role in activity, comes much more often to the average overall school student.

    4. Students in the smaller schools experience different kinds of satisfaction in their out-of-class activities than do larger school students. The small school yields satisfactions of developing competence, of meeting challenges, of class cooperation with peers. The larger school yields more satisfactions which are vicarious and which are connecting to being a part of an imposing institution.

    5. Students from small schools report more sense of responsibility to their school's affairs. Furthermore, academically marginal students in the larger schools are particularly lacking in reported senses of obligation to their schools enterprises. They often appear to be social "outsiders."

> The marginal student in the small schools, however, are just as likely to reveal responsibility attitudes as are the regular students.[1]

Jim Davies, Graduate Student, Curriculum and Instruction, U.T.K., Knoxville served as recorder for this interest group and provided the following summary.

The population growth in the U.S. as a whole has leveled off after the post war baby boom with an annual increase of about 1.8% expected for the next 20 years. Rural farm population is likely to continue to decline, but small communities with special characteristics are likely to show growth. A small town is likely to grow if it

1. offers jobs
2. offers housing within communting distance of work
3. is on good roads (interstates in particular)
4. offers adequate sewage and water facilities
5. offers services or amenities (including schools) which people desire
6. is central to a population to be served
7. has land for development at moderate cost
8. has dynamic leadership.

The school in small communities is an institution around which people can organize and which can compete for the allegiances of our increasingly mobile population. Gump, examining the characteristics of big vs. small schools found the following:

1. It takes a 100% increase in school population to produce a 17% increase in variety of courses.

2. Students in small schools experience more different kinds of experiences than do students in large schools.

3. Students in small schools get into more demanding roles in their activities.

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[1]Paul V. Gump, "Big Schools-Small Schools," Marvaria, New York: Chronical Guidance Publications, 1972.

4. Small school students get satisfaction from directly meeting challenges while large school students receive satisfaction from being part of an imposing institution.

5. Students - even the academically marginal - report a sense of responsibility for their school if it is small.

Small schools may be becoming more popular in larger cities with trends toward neighborhood schools and modular construction.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND SERVICES

Paul Zarbock, Director
Area Health Education Center
Knoxville, Tennessee

This was one of six small group sessions at which a concept presentation was made to define and develop discussion which was directed toward the identification of two key issues and the examination of the implications for public education. - Ed. Note.

In recent years, much of the emphasis on the part of federal programs has gone into up-grading training and educational skills. Frequently these federally supported programs have been mutually exclusive. The end product has been that the many U. S. citizens have followed the tracking system of vocational training while other individuals have persued an education track.

However, many social planners are now realizing that in the presence of poor health, neither program can work. If, for example, an individual is too poor to attend school, the best of facilities, teaching staff, library capability and other educational services cannot be used. By the same token, if an individual is too ill to attend a training session or stay within the labor market, the best of his experiences are of no value.

Health, thus, is the major ingredient for success within the education process.

Our discussion will focus upon several aspects:

1. The distribution of health professionals within the state of Tennessee.

2. The anticipated level of production of people in health careers within Tennessee.

3. The role of the rural school system within the health industry.

4. Specific recommendations for education of students so that entree into the health care system can be facilitated.

While Tennessee is predominately a rural state, large population centers do exist. The most notable of these are the four metropolitan counties: Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, and Shelby. During the decade from 1960 to 1970, 72 of Tennessee's 95 counties increased in population, posing many problems in providing health care and in maintaining the environment.

Migration from rural areas to metropolitan areas has altered the nature of the health problems in both settings. As the population of Tennessee changes so does its health needs. For this reason, projected population should influence the current direction of the health care system as well as future directions. The most striking feature of the projected population by county is that every county in the state is expected to increase in population 65 and over.

Economic and educational factors are important determinants of both health and the ability to obtain medical care. The poor people of Tennessee are scattered throughout the state, both in cities and in rural areas.

In summary, the machinery for change in the health care industry is rapidly being established. Information on new direction in health and opportunity for involvement should be at the finger tips of educators who can contribute significantly to this change. Workshop will focus on both change and recommendations for involvement.

Ray Dockery, Graduate Student, Curriculum and Instruction, U.T.K., Knoxville served as recorder for this interest group and provided the following summary.

More than any other country in the world, the United States spends a higher percentage of its gross national product for health services; yet, we lag behind many countries in several health categories. Compared to other countries, the United States is twenty-fourth in life expentancy for men and ninth for women, while our infant mortality rate is only fifth lowest.

Medical services are limited as to who may benefit. Unless one is blind, disabled, 65 plus, male, white, and residing in a middle or upper class residence, his chances of receiving free medical services are almost nonexistent. Of the above categories, the most significant variable is the place of residence.

The three major causes of death in most communities are not susceptible to physician care. Those causes are heart attacks, strokes, and accidents. The rural schools can benefit from available health services by identifying a problem that can be halted by preventative measures.

These rural schools and systems can benefit by bargaining with their strengths. The personality or quality of rural life is one such strength, while the climate for interchange is another strength that will be an inducing agent for drawing on outside help.

After identifying the problem a survey of the local community, adjacent communities, and within the state government for agencies which can be of service should be taken. The next step is the actual treatment of the problem by the outside agencies.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL EDUCATION: THE STATE OF THE ART

Rowan C. Stutz,
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Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Portland, Oregon

Presiding at this second general session was Karl E. Keefer, Dean of the College of Education, University of Tennessee, Martin. - Ed. Note.

I am pleased to be invited to your Small Schools Invitational Conference. I'm a product of rural Alberta in Canada, I grew up in a town so small the "Entering Town" sign and the "Leaving Town" sign were on the same posts. The few houses in the town were so scattered each family kept its own tom cat. We didn't have much reading material around our house but I remember how much I enjoyed the hours I spent thumbing through the Eaton catalog (that's equivalent to Sears) and when I found something I liked I'd tear out the page and hurry into the house to see if Mother would let me order it.

After I graduated from Normal school, I got married and went to teach in a one room school out in Whisky Gap, Alberta. My bride and I lived in a little two room house up on the side of the hill overlooking the valley (gap) in which was nestled a general store, two grain elevators and the school. Our nearest neighbor was an old Indian. But we enjoyed them immensely. You see his wife was an old Indian fighter.

Then I remember well the day our bathroom caught on fire and the time we had drawing water from the well to put the fire out. Luckily it didn't spread to the house.

Well, those are some of my rural credentials, I've had some experience in educational research, too. My wife will verify the enthusiasm with which

I tried to develop skill in research procedures. In the early years of our married life I'd have her wax one half of the kitchen floor with one kind of wax and the other half with another. Same with detergent for dishes; soap for washing clothes; she even went along with experimenting with different kinds of face cream; but she drew the line when our identical twin girls were ready to baptism and I proposed baptising one and leaving the other as a control group.

The assigned topic of my address tnis afternoon is "The Development of Rural Education in America: The State of the Art." This is always a dangerous topic,for the state of anything at anytime is a function of one's perspective. I think I would like to subtitle my keynote address this afternoon "But the Emperor Has Nothing On."

Story of Emperor

A well-known Hans Christian Anderson fairy story tells of an Emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all of his money on them. His favorite activity was walking in the park showing off his latest costume. He had a different one for every hour in the day.

One day, two swindlers came to the great city in which the Emperor lived. They told everyone that they were weavers and they knew how to weave the most beautiful cloth in all the world, The colors and patterns of this cloth, they said, were most delicate, and the cloth had a mystical quality--the material would seem invisible to those who were either unsuited for the office they held or very stupid.

Of course, when the Emperor heard of the wonderful cloth, he gave the two swindlers a great sum of money to weave him some of the beautiful and magic fabric and to tailor him a costume from it.

The weavers set up two looms and pretended to be very busy.

From time to time the Emperor sent some of his royal cabinet ministers to inspect the progress.

Each one, upon viewing the empty looms and the busy weavers thought, "Merciful heavens, can I be so stupid or unfit? I can't see anything."

But when urged by the swindling weavers, they would cover up their assumed stupidity with a report to the Emperor that the material was exquisite and that the colors and design were most unusual.

As the reports grew increasingly glowing, the whole city was talking about the wonderful material.

Finally, the Emperor himself decided to pay a visit to the weavers. Accompanied by a group of special courtiers, among whom were two who had already seen the imaginary cloth, he went to call upon the two weavers whose hands were busily [illegible] empty air above the looms.

"Isn't it magnificent," cried the loyal officials who had been there before. "Look at the amazing pattern, Your Magesty, and the colors."

"What can this mean?" thought the Emperor. "I see nothing at all! How terrible! Am I a fool? Am I unfit to be Emperor? Oh, nothing more dreadful could happen to me."

But aloud, he said, "It is handsome, indeed. We approve." And he gazed at the empty looms. He, too, would not admit that no cloth was there.

Well, as you know, the weavers continued their pretense even to cutting and stitching garments for the Emperor, and the widely proclaimed day arrived when the Emperor would appear in the park in his new costume.

Can you imagine the sight as the Emperor walked forth in his underclothes. The chamberlains with their hands high holding an imaginary train, all walking under a splendid canopy.

The people cried from the streets and from the windows. "Behold our Emperor! How beautiful are his clothes! See the royal train!" No one would say that he could not see the new clothes for that would have meant that he was unfit for his office or that he was stupid.

Suddenly a little child cried out, "But he has nothing on!" And apparently in this particular city adults had not stopped listening when their children spoke, for soon everyone was crying, "The Emperor has nothing on."

And what of the Emperor? Well, he behaved rather typically for a leader caught in a farce. He trembled for he knew they spoke the truth, but he told himself, "The procession cannot stop now. I cannot let the people know how easily I have been duped." And so he walked on more proudly than before, and his chamberlains followed, holding high the train which was not there.

I'm sorry to say that for the most part over the years our rural school improvement efforts have had nothing on. And, like the people, school administrators like myself have been reluctant to admit it for fear of appearing stupid or unfit.

For example, when we get together we like to quote statistics regarding the number of small schools and small school systems we have eliminated through consolidation and reorganization as prima facie evidence that the quality of instruction has improved. In some instances per pupil costs have gone down and a wider range of course offerings is available at the secondary school level. However as one of your conference papers points out it takes 100% increase in size to produce a 17% increase in course offerings. But study after study has failed to uncover evidence that the consolidated rural

school gets better results than before consolidation. Also last evening we warmly and I'm sure with considerable accuracy identified the most consistent strength of the small school - its close human relationships.

And yet when we take a closer look we find that even this positive characteristic is used to the disadvantage of many who attend or teach in small schools because for some it acts to stifle individuality and diversity of life style; for some it tends to lock them into patterns of expectation that become self-fulfilling prophecies that are destructive to their development; and for some it acts in ways that discriminate against them because of who they are.

Perhaps the greatest need at this time in rural educational development is more accurate perception on the part of those who live and teach in small communities and schools of what is as the first step in identifying the gaps between what is and what ought to be.

For a number of years I was associated with the Western States Small Schools Project in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. At that time there were significant rural school improvement projects going on in Texas, Oregon, North Dakota and upstate New York. In 1971 the former project officers of these various projects got together in Portland and tried to assess the results of 10 years of concentrated effort to improve rural schools. These projects had focused upon inservice teacher and administrator training, shared services, demonstration teaching and consultant services. Incentives in the form of money, publicity and accreditation were used to encourage participation. The conclusion of this panel of directors as they reflected upon ten years of hard work is as follows:

> *"Within the original conceptions, these strategies worked and goals were achieved. However, such achievement highlighted the inadequacies of the original conception*

by being piecemeal and temporary, often involving only one teacher in a single innovative practice, affecting few students and seldom lasting beyond the tenure of the teacher or administrator directly involved in the innovation. The introduction of extensive innovative practice, affecting few students and seldom lasting beyond the tenure of the teacher or administrator directly involved in the innovation. The introduction of extensive innovations in many schools did result in several teachers changing classroom management and instructional procedures, but, even after several years, these changes had not been attempted by colleagues."

"These conclusions were derived from direct observations at schools which were targets for change. Most observers were startled and depressed at how little the change strategies had affected what actually went on within the classroom. A remarkable degree of similarity existed between the classrooms in "innovative" rural schools and those in most other rural schools. The objectives seemed untouched; the student tasks varied little from the usual passive and verbal learning pattern; and the pupil-teacher relationship remained primarily unaltered from the traditional pattern in which the teacher functions as the purveyor of truth in virtually all legitimate classroom transactions."

In 1970 Goodlad and Lein gathered information in schools across the nation in order to determine the extent to which educational reform was finding its way into the classroom. They observed classroom practice in 153 classrooms in 67 schools that were reputed to be innovative schools. The conclusion of this study reads like this:

"While they (many principals and teachers) claimed individualization of instruction, use of a wide range of instructional materials, a sense of purpose, group processes, and inductive or discovery methods--our record showed little or no evidence of them."

Studies during the past two years by Gross, Martin and Harrison, Sarason and Smith and Keith confirm the Goodlad-Klein findings. That is, that <u>educational change during the past decade has produced little or no evidence that innovations were actually implemented in more than name only</u>. Data gathered

by Gross showed clearly that six months after the introduction of an educational innovation that the staff were still behaving in the traditional way, were devoting very little time to trying to implement the change, and generally had an unfavorable attitude toward it.

What then is the state of the Art in Rural Educational Development? Its simple that our efforts to improve the quality and equality of learning opportunities for rural students have been disappointing. We have decreased the number of schools. We have obtained a better distribution of wealth. We have improved educational technology. We have adopted a lot of new labels. But we have not accomplished what we had hoped to accomplish in improving the quality of the learning experiences for all children. We simply have not successfully capitalized upon the potential strength of flexibility and intimate human relationship that are possible because of small size.

Why with such an investment of money, time and talents, have we not been more effective? Why with such high hopes and initial enthusiasm have we not been able to sustain commitment and confidence? It certainly isn't because the people who live and teach in rural communities are unintelligent or uncommitted. Maybe there are just too few of them to do everything.

In 1972, Michael Fullan conducted an exhaustive review of the process of educational change. The main purposes of his review were to arrive at an assessment of what is known about the process of change as it occurs at the school level, and to derive the many lessons or applications from that knowledge.

I have summarized his conclusions into what I have called twelve characteristics of the Model Innovative Process. These characteristics have failed to produce significant change:

1. Innovations are developed externally and transmitted to schools on a relatively universal basis,

2. Users of innovations (parents, teachers, students, have had limited roles in the educational change process, and generally are seen as passive adopters of the best of recent innovations,

3. Primacy is given to innovations which often become the ends of the change process rather than the means for achieving desired outcomes.

4. Change is initiated from the outside and schools are viewed as a part of the universe of adopters,

5. Educational reforms are often individualistic--a result of a permissive process,

6. Values and goals as articulated by the users have no direct influence in the process,

7. Diversity of innovations is not allowed for,

8. The force of the innovative process is from the top down,

9. Role changes in user systems, which are theoretically part and parcel of intended consequences of most resent educational innovations, are not recognized and planned for,

10. Little awareness exists that innovations require unlearning and relearning, and create uncertainty and a concern about competencies to perform new roles,

11. New educational ideas and organizational changes often, through lack of user involvement, become empty alternatives because they create unrealistic conditions and expectations for teacher, administrator, parent and/or student performance.

12. Those affected by the change are dependent upon the process.

In a nutshell, these twelve characteristics say that when innovations are developed external to schools and transmitted them, and when the users (students, teachers, parents) do not participate in selecting and/or creating the innovations to be used that there will be no significant change at the user level.

What is needed, then, if effective innovations are to occur in rural schools, is a new strategy for educational change. One that: (1) radically restructures the role of the user, (2) completely reverses the direction of incluence in the process of change, (3) changes the role of the external chance agent and (4) that works in rural areas where the characteristics of small size, remoteness and sparsity combine to create a unique set of change strategy specifications.

At the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory we are working on the development of just such a strategy. It is called the Rural Futures Development Strategy. We're not sure just yet how it will all turn out.

The two handouts will help you decide whether or not you were on the right track. They convey to you the salient principles and tactics employed in this strategy and describe the products we are developing to enable the strategy to be implemented through state education agencies, regional service centers, universities, community colleges and other agencies or institutions that provide support services to rural school systems and communities.

The one handout is a small flyer that introduces our program. The other is a comparison of the characteristics of the RFD strategy with the characteristics of the Model Innovative Process described by Fullan.

Now what might all this mean to you here in Tennessee?

(1) First, it is my opinion that you would be foolish indeed to ignore the lessons of the past and parade your educational improvement efforts strategies that someone has told you have mystical qualities but which in reality are without the power to cause lasting and effective change.

(2) Second, you might, therefore, want to examine your own strategies to see if they meet some of the criteria contained in the handouts. And, consider how you can build

the mechanisms, institute the processes and develop the skills to work for greater local participation in decision making.

(3) And third, you may wish to keep in touch with the work we are doing at the Lab and try out some of our products and processes as soon as they become available. (See Appendix)

What you should not do is give up in despair. We do need to keep trying. Rural schools need help. Students who attend these schools deserve the finest educational opportunities we can provide. Rural school can and must be good schools. Toward that end we must continue to commit resources and talent.

After Mr. Stutz's presentation, John Lovell, Professor, Educational Administration and Supervision, UTK, Knoxville, and Lee Davis, Supervisor, Overton County Schools, Livingston, reacted to the address.

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Russell French
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Attempting to summarize the ideas, concerns and promises of a conference like this puts one in much the same position as a Tennessee Blue Tick Hound confronted with a whole yard full of trees. You know you can't hit every tree, but you're compelled to try to cover the forest.

I shall not try to add anything to Dr. Edington's opening presentation on the strengths and weaknesses of small schools. Those remarks are summarized elsewhere, and they appear to have been clearly and concisely stated. It seems to be sufficient to say that one of our tasks following this conference will be to evaluate our own schools in light of Dr. Edington's listed strengths and weaknesses. Where we find weaknesses in our structures, programs, and practices we must try to find means of changing or strengthening those structures, programs and practices. Where we find strengths, we must build on them, publicize them, help others develop similar strengths.

Last night, following Dr. Edington's presentation, we were asked to discuss strengths and weaknesses in Tennessee small schools as we perceived them. As recorders from each discussion presented the consensus views of their group, several common elements surfaced. Most groups seemed to agree that strengths of small schools include their potential for (1) person-to-

person contact and communication (a sense of community) and (2) flexibility and responsiveness. Appropriately, those present last night perceived potential in these areas as being the greatest strength. Few suggested that this potential is yet reality.

Perhaps, it is worth noting here that quantity of communication and person-to-person contact does not necessarily speak to the issue of quality. Perhaps, this is why so many conference participants spoke of the potential sense of community in small schools rather than the reality. Both quantity and quality of communication must be considered in realizing the potential of the small school in its community.

Weaknesses identified in last evening's sessions might be grouped in four broad categories: (1) people, (2) structures, (3) skills, and (4) money. Reiterated several times was concern for the quality of educational leadership (both administrative and instructional) presently available in small schools in this state. Inability or failure to conceptualize and/or utilize fully appropriate organizational structures to deal with legal, medical, social, psychological and educational problems appears to be a problem in many small schools and communities.

Concern was also expressed in the evening discussions for developing a broader base of skills with which to implement innovation and change. Several participants also suggested that those who direct and shape the small schools need to develop more expertise in identifying and dealing with things over which they have control rather than spending disproportionate amounts of time trying to cope with things which they cannot control.

Availability of funds is a major problem for small schools. Expertise in finding and allocating funds is essential, and the small schools need assistance in developing strategies to bring about change in present patterns of fund allocation at the state level.

This morning participants had opportunity to interact in six structured small group sessions. As I listened to the interactions and talked with recorders and participants, I found several points of interest and issues for examination in each group. I would like to share a few of those with you here.

Social Values in Rural Tennessee

The session on rural social values brought clearly into focus again our need to be sensitive to differences in value patterns in people and schools. The questions of who is influential in rural communities and how their influence is obtained need more consideration by those who direct and work with schools in these settings. In addition, educators must develop their own potential to be influential.

Political Realities

A primary question still confronting those concerned about the progress of small schools in Tennessee is the question of superintendent selection by election or appointment. While arguments can be made for either approach, the question must be resolved on the basis of benefit to the learner, and the community must be educated to realities beyond the political realm.

Another concern of many is fiscal independence for boards of education. Obviously, fiscal independence could remove the school board from some spheres of political influence, but all political, legal, and economic implications of this thrust are not yet clear.

The sessions on social values and political realities did bring into focus for me certain *implications for action:*

1. If the elected superintendency is a problem or if school boards really should have fiscal independence, changes in present procedures will require constitutional amendment. Developing support and pressure for constitutional amendment will require

coordinated action by educators in small schools and those of us who are truly interested but not directly involved. One outgrowth of this conference might be development of an agency or organizational structure to investigate thoroughly these and other issues and coordinate the action necessary to bring about resolution.

2. These two sessions raise the question, "What are we doing about the training of administrators for rural areas?" In attending to this question, we are presented with others:

   a. "What is there to attract a competent administrator to the rural school? Have we made the enticements clear and used them to advantage?"

   b. "Given the present conditions in rural communities, how do we select and who do we select for training and advancement to the Superintendency? Have we consciously sought out individuals who are committed to education and who are or can become politically astute? Have we really contributed to their ability to cope with and direct the realities of the small school situation in their training programs?"

   Universities and others engaged in the preparation of administrators for small schools must re-examine their programs and philosophies, as a result of what we have heard and said in this conference. Further it appears that our Colleges of Education and those of you representing small schools should sit down together to develop new experiences and strategies for the preparation of administrators. Responsibility does not rest entirely with one agency.

Demographic Considerations

Probably, nobody should leave this conference without reading or committing himself to read Dr. Cole's summary of the Gump studies. These studies put to rest some myths, point up some trends and raise even more questions for our further consideration. Other aspects of the interaction in this session also have their implications.

If people are becoming disillusioned with big cities and large places and moving to our small towns because of their disillusionment, how do we prevent repetition of the "bigness", and how do we prevent repetition of some of the problems which created disillusionment and led to out-migration

from our cities? These questions may seem far removed from present problems and concerns, but now is the time for consideration and planning before the problems exist.

Other results of the move to small communities obviously can be overcrowding of school facilities and need for additional people, materials and equipment, but a tax structure which does not or cannot expand in proportion to the needs. This potential problem suggests a need to analyze the total community in terms of learning resources and to develop action plans for utilizing the resources available.

Consideration of demographic issues at this point in time cannot help but lead one to wonder what the effects of our energy crisis will be. Will this change or slow patterns of out-migration from our cities? If the out-migration continues, will we confront even more crucial problems of energy availability in our small towns and schools? Will the linkage of inter-dependency developing between small towns and big cities (even in the educational arena) be broken? What will be the effects on inservice staff development, the relationships between universities and small schools, the embryonic development of cooperative programs among small school districts?

The Educational Scene

Inspection of the present educational scene in our small schools seemed to present to participants in this session several crucial needs:

1. A need to better identify desired changes in programs and procedures.

2. A need to better identify community leaders and work with them to implement desired change.

3. A need to maximize the possibility that potential strengths can become real strengths.

4. A need for more and better contact between professional educators in small schools and professional educators in

educational organizations, agencies, and teacher education institutions.

5. A need to conceptualize and develop new and different delivery systems for inservice education, professional growth, and inter-agency communication.

The Economic Picture

Crucial concerns in this group appeared to be the present inequities and/or inappropriateness of foundations programs to small schools and the problems related to tax structures and tax base in the small community. These discussions provide several implications for action following this conference:

1. Small schools must organize to right the wrongs (to get action at the state level).

2. Colleges of Education and other university units must assist the small schools in analyzing and coping with finance-related problems. (Perhaps a finance service center could be organized to assist with defining and coping with finance problems.)

3. If foundations programs and other support programs remain as they now are, small schools must look closely at in-school factors which influence their returns from these programs. Perhaps the quality of instruction, or the color of the classrooms, or the flexibility of programs directly influences daily attendance and absence. If so, these factors can and should be changed.

Health Conditions and Services

We were made aware in this session (if we did not know before) that health services are not being provided to many in the rural setting. What then can be done by schools to alleviate this problem? Dr. Zarbock suggested that we must structure new social systems and use existing ones more effectively. His simple analysis of social systems can be so important to our efforts in behalf of small schools that it is worth repeating here:

1. Social systems are built on one of three bases:

   a. Cathexis (personal relationships)

b. Duty and obligation

c. Bargaining

2. Bargaining offers an avenue not yet taken by schools (or most communities) in their efforts to gain much-needed services and programs.

3. The golden rule of bargaining is "Bargain on your strengths."

NOTE: If what we have said about small communities and schools is true, our bargaining strengths include:
a. the personality and quality of rural life;
b. a climate for cooperative action; and
c. the problems which exist-waiting to be treated.

Several exciting implications can be drawn from Dr. Zarbock's remarks:

1. The social systems concepts offered here are applicable to many problem areas identified in the conference.

2. Health service problems might be solved by seeking the assistance of Dr. Zarbock and his counterparts across the state in planning, bargaining and program implementation. This approach might be replicated in other problem areas after identifying service agents.

3. In many problem areas, service resources (people and programs) are thin, but provision of some education services to primary receivers (those who get there first) can be duplicated to secondary receivers by means of multi-media formats.

In the final analysis, the problems and potentials identified in each session, the implications for action resulting from each session do not necessarily summarize the conference as a whole or provide the total spectrum of suggestions and possibilities. As in many other things, the whole may be greater than the sum of the parts. In this light, it seems to me that this conference provides us with several other implications:

1. This group (perhaps with the addition of some classroom teachers and a few others) should be brought back together 4-6 months from now. By then we will have digested our two days here, developed new insights, had some new thoughts on what can and should be done.

2. After we leave here, each of us must refine and share our concerns and ideas with others around us. We need to spread what we have gained here.

3. We must see to it that the products of this conference do not fade away. A steering committee or task force of some kind must be created to help us pick up the implications of the conference and develop action plans - cooperatively.

4. If we really care about small schools and their future, we must individually and collectively commit ourselves to identifying strengths and using them, confronting weaknesses and doing something about them. As suggested early in this conference, let's get busy dealing with the things we can do something about.

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APPENDIX

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY
RURAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
ROWAN C. STUTZ, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MODAL INNOVATIVE PROCESS: (as identified by Michael Fullan, 1972)	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL FUTURES DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:
1. Innovations are developed externally and transmitted to schools on a relatively universal basis.	1. Learners, parents and teachers have enough understanding of curriculum design, organizational development and instructional methods that they can make wise choices regarding the creative development of new programs, utilizing components of wide variety of alternatives.
2. Users of innovations (parents, teachers, students) have had limited roles in the educational change process, and generally are seen as passive adopters of the best of recent innovations.	2. Users (citizens, educators, students) are in control of the innovative process in their own schools and participate in selecting and/or creating the innovations to be used and in working out the implementation problems.
3. Primacy is given to innovations which often become the ends of the change process rather than the means for achieving desired outcomes.	3. Primacy is given to outcomes and user capacities to innovate. Innovations are viewed as means to accomplishing desired outcomes.
4. Change is initiated from the outside and schools are viewed as a part of the universe of adopters.	4. Schools and their communities are viewed as initiators of change and as selective, creative, deliberative users of the products of research and development.
5. Educational reforms are often individualistic--a result of a permissive process.	5. Educational reforms are pervasive--a result of a participative process.
6. Values and goals as articulated by the users have no direct influence in the process.	6. Users' values and goals provide much of the input to the process and directly influence decisions made about innovating.
7. Diversity of innovations is not allowed for.	7. RFD assumes wide diversity in goals and legitimizes diversity of alternatives. It recognizes that different communities and schools may have different objectives and priorities at any given point in time.
8. The force of the innovative process is from the top down.	8. The force of the innovative process is from the bottom up. The role of the top-down relationship is to facilitate the bottom-up innovative process.

(Characteristics of the Modal Innovative Process)	(Characteristics of the Rural Futures Development Process)
9. Role changes in user systems, which are theoretically part and parcel of intended consequences of most recent educational innovations, are not recognized and planned for.	9. Changes in roles and role relationships are part and parcel of the implementation process.
10. Little awareness exists that innovations require unlearning and relearning, and create uncertainty and a concern about competencies to perform new roles.	10. RFD recognizes that virtually every significant change has implications for changes in roles and role relationships. These changes, and the opportunity resources and atmosphere for acquiring needed new competencies, are integral components of the implementation process.
11. New educational ideas and organizational changes often, through lack of user involvement, become empty alternatives because they create unrealistic conditions and expectations for teacher, administrator, parent and/or student performance.	11. Users participate in deciding what changes are to be made and in deciding what is needed to successfully implement them. Thus, new performance expectations are more likely to be realistic and planned changes are more likely to occur.
12. Those affected by the change are dependent upon the process.	12. Use of the process is dependent upon those affected by the changes.